

Disclaimer they all belong to J.

One Hundred and Forty going on Twelve

Fates intervention

Silent tears ran down the wrinkled face of the old man, it was one hundred years today since she had died. One hundred sad lonely years, filled with sorrow and emptiness, his heart still yearned for her, his soul, his pained and tortured soul wept for her.

She had been fortytwo years old when her husband had killed her in a blind drunken rage; as a Weasley she had suffered twenty years of his abuse, twenty years without telling anyone about it. Abuse only discovered by her death at the hands of the brutal man.

Harry and she had both been thirty eight years old when they had both received the anonymous owls, the notes the owls brought had simply told them to ask in the record office for book Number one, on page five hundred and thirty, they would find something of great interest. They had through some strange twist of fate, turned up at the same time to look at the book, both carrying identical messages. They were best friends, had been for nearly all their lives, so they naturally looked at the book together.

They both knew, once they had read the entry, why they had lived such miserable lives, separately they had both been very unhappy, they read the entry together and together they had left the room. It was the last time he ever saw her alive, her fire and determination were gone, her spirit broken, she had simply said "it's too late," and left him standing watching her leave. The day she died he had known before he was told, he had felt it. His heart had broken just a little more and after so many long years he was still truly unhappy without her in his life, he missed her so much. In his long life he could count the happy days he had had on his fingers and toes.

Today he was one hundred and fortytwo years old, today he was to retire from the post of head of the Wizengamont, he wanted to spend his remaining years as the headmaster of Hogwarts with no other distractions. He had called in to the record office today just as he had

done for exactly one hundred years; he stood at the small lectern and read the entry once again.

Entry Number 2904... Date 01. 01. 105,AD.

Hermione J Granger, D.O.B 19 September 1979, Harry J Potter, D.O.B 31 July 1980.

Expected Date of Union. 01 September 1991

Last Date on time limit 24 December 2019...

Date of Union... 00 Unfulfilled...

Harry looked again at the first page in the huge book. And read the page they had not read that first time.

Book of the Fated.

Warning to all written within.

Here in are the names of those chosen by fate to be together as soul-mates for all time. Let it be known throughout the world, that misery and torment for all eternity will befall any who wilfully prevent these unions. For those whose unions are never made complete, only a life of unhappiness remains. For those who find their soul-mate a simple kiss will complete their union.

But beware lest you stand to close to such an event.

If in this book you find your name then take heed, find your mate or suffer an eternal search. There will be no rest until two become one.

For those within the pages of this book are placed here by the power of the universe... Look now learn and be warned you can not escape fate...

Note: Unions of soul-mates are recognised by the fates and the wizarding world as magical unions, unbreakable and eternal. Thus

the Wizarding world accepts these unions as a legal and binding marriage for all time.

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Harry left the records office and made his way along the various corridors that would lead him to the Wizengamont chamber, the place where the ruling body of the wizarding world met to make new laws, and to hold session. He was half way along the main corridor when he was stopped; a young wizard had joined him. Ashford Lupin was a brilliant young member of the untouchables, "I have the experiment scheduled for around fifteen minutes time, if you are interested professor you could come with me and witness the creation of the first personal time portal, it will be so much better than the old time turners."

Harry saw no reason he could not spare this eager young man a few minutes of his time; he was passing that way anyway. They were just a few dozen yards away from the lab when they saw it, a binding flash and an enormous wave of magic rippling speedily toward them, Harry knew they couldn't stop it but he tried a shield charm anyway.

Harry never heard the explosion that would have been the biggest in the ministry's history, the accident in the department of mysteries came from Ashford Lupin's lab. The magical wave hit Harry half a second after he raised a shield, but he was lifted from his feet and hurled backward. When he woke up Harry found himself surrounded by a dense cold damp mass of swirling grey cloud, he could just see his hand if he held it at less than arms length. From all sides he could hear voices, thousands of them in all languages, both male and female yet none loud enough to hear the words.

Slowly Harry began to edge forward, his hands groping for a wall, a door, anything to help him figure exactly where he was, but there was nothing to be found, he turned slowly to face the other way, maybe if he went away from the point of origin of the magical wave he would find some thing, someone. The voices, indiscernible conversations, still assailed him from all sides, some he seemed to be getting closer too, then he would lose them amongst all the others, he tried shouting to draw their attention, but to no avail.

Then he heard a voice he thought he knew, the deep booming voice of Hagrid so he turned in that direction, he thought he heard Hagrid again, calling for the first years, but the voice faded once again. Harry realised the voices were being lost to him when he stopped to listen, so he determined not to stop or stand still again, he needed to know where he was, he needed something or someone to help him find his way out of this cold damp all engulfing fog.

Again he heard a voice, a female he thought he knew, he knew the words she said, they had been forever etched in his memory, following the voice he heard it again 'Platform 9 ¾ this way' the voice was undeniable, impossible though it seemed, he knew the voice was real. Still following the direction of the voice Harry finally caught sight of something; it was a fleeting glance at a boy's head of unruly black hair.

Feeling his way forward Harry found the cloud thinning he could see the crowds of people milling around the platform within the fog, then he could see that head of black hair as it headed for a compartment of a train, and the boy was passing just in front of him, reaching forward he tried to get the boy's attention, he was close enough to touch the young boy. The moment his hand touched the shoulder of the young boy in front of him Harry felt himself being pulled, dragged forward as though torn apart, his mind and soul seemed to be ripping apart then the darkness came.

Harry woke, or at least he became aware that he was sitting in a compartment of the Hogwarts express. Looking out of the window and seeing Ginny Weasley standing holding her mother's hand he was stunned. He sat there for quite some time trying to work out what was happening where he was; he suddenly knew where he was but he was totally surprised to find out when he was. Somehow he was back where it all started, he had gone back in time to September the first nineteen ninety one, the day things began to go wrong for him and Hermione.

The first thing Harry decided to do was to leave the compartment that Ron Weasley would enter; he needed to prevent Ron and Hermione's first meeting. Forfeiting his happier days at the Burrow was a small

price to pay for the life of Hermione Jane Granger. Hurrying from his seat Harry made his way down the train, looking in each compartment as he passed. He had travelled nearly all the way to the front of the train when he saw them, a girl and a boy, both around his age sitting on opposite sides of the compartment.

Harry opened the door and asked for permission to join them.

She was exactly as he had remembered her, her hair that was so bushy, stuck out in all directions, her two front teeth were slightly too big, and she had the warmest smile, he couldn't remember noticing the smile last time, but as he ran the memory through his mind he realised she had never smiled that day they first met. Closing the door behind him he introduced himself. "Hi, I'm Harry."

She spoke up for both of them "Hi, I'm Hermione Granger, and he's Neville Longbottom."

"Wow what a beautiful name, Hermione, isn't that a name from Shakespeare?" Harry asked knowing the answer. "Would it be ok if I joined you two in here for the whole trip?"

Hermione's smile was huge when she nodded, she seemed to have become shy, so Harry decided he needed to make her feel comfortable again. "Hi Neville, heard about your parents, bet you are so proud of them," he said looking at the nervous boy holding a toad.

"I know a charm to stop toads from escaping, if you are interested," he told Neville with a chuckle.

"Do you? That would be so good, Trevor is always escaping, I don't even know how he does it," Neville said grinning.

Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out his wand, but then he hesitated "Hermione if I tell you what the charm is would you do it, I'll bet you are so much better at this than me."

The huge smile on Hermione's face made his heart glow as she answered "Well if you think it'll be ok."

Harry got Neville to place the toad in the middle of the floor then he whispered into Hermione's ear, her scent was exactly as it had always been, no perfumes just pure clean smelling Hermione and a tiny hint of vanilla, he thought of flowers and honey ice cream and books.

Hermione waved her wand down then upward from left to right just as he had told her, as soon as she had said the words, Trevor found himself inside a glass aquarium, a few stones and a drop of water lay on the bottom for him to enjoy.

"Well it'll keep him from escaping." Harry burst into laughter.

"Wow, Harry." Neville exclaimed

Hermione stood to examine the glass tank that now held Trevor; she seemed to be satisfied as she sat back down. Harry took the seat across from her, wondering what to say next he absentmindedly rubbed his fringe from his eyes.

Hermione looked at him for a moment "You're Harry Potter. I've read about you!"

"Harry Potter, The Harry Potter, I never believed Gran when she said we were the same age." Neville gasped.

"It's no big deal Neville, not really, I'm just like you," Harry said trying to calm Neville down.

"Bet you know loads of magic," Neville commented as he moved Trevor's new glass tank to the seat next to him.

"No just some stuff I read in a book, if we were friends I could tell you, but my uncle says nobody wants to be friends with a freak." Harry said knowing Hermione would say something.

"That's awful, why ever would he say that, honestly. I'll be your friend Harry if you want me to be," Hermione told him smiling

"Yeah me too," Neville said losing some of his nervousness.

“Why did your uncle call you a freak?” Hermione wanted to know.

“Well if you don’t mind me staying here with you, I’ll tell you as soon as I fetch my trunk.” Harry rushed off back down the train before they had answered him, he was soon back and had his trunk stowed away.

“Now what was it you wanted to know, oh yes it all started when I was left on the doorstep of my aunt and Uncle.” he began... Harry told his new best friends about his life at number four Privet Drive. Even after so many years the memories were still fresh and painful. He knew his story was hard to believe, especially for the two people he had just told who had never been without the support of a loving family. He was trying to think of a way to prove he was not exaggerating like boys tend to do when he remembered something he had hidden so very well before.

Standing up and walking to the door he slipped the lock in place then pulled down the blinds. Then he turned his back on them and slowly pulled his shirt off. “I got these because Hagrid turned up to give me my letter.”

Harry’s back was covered in bruises and welts, they were yellowing now but they were still highly visible. Hermione sucked in a long slow breath, while Neville went white in the face.

“Oh Harry, how could they, they must be really evil people,” Hermione said as she gently placed her hand on his back and felt the welts.

Harry felt a wonderful fire on his skin where she touched him, “I don’t want you telling anybody, I have a way to sort this out myself,” Harry said as she felt how thin he was. Slowly the talk between the three of them moved on to brighter things, Hogwarts was their favourite topic for the few minutes before the trolley lady appeared selling all kinds of sweets. Harry bought some for all of them, getting some extra chocolate for Hermione, “This will cheer you up when you feel a bit low,” he told her.

As the scenery changed and the mountains rose up on either side of them, Neville went off to the toilet; while he was gone Harry made a

decision. He wanted to eliminate any chance of Ron getting together with Hermione and he knew only the one way to do it. It would mean moving things along so much quicker than he would normally ever have the nerve to do.

“Hermione, I know we only met a short while ago, but would you be my girlfriend?” he asked her.

“Why would you want me as your girlfriend? Harry, you hardly know me,” she asked in return.

Typical Hermione he thought needs a reason for everything “Well you are so pretty and clever and we are going to be best friends anyway, but mainly because I really, really like you.” He replied.

She had never had any friends before, her reason was so different than Harry’s but she and Harry had both been lonely children, now she saw a chance of not being lonely again “I’ve never had a boyfriend before, I like you too Harry, so yes, ok, I’ll be your girlfriend,” she said her smile reaching right down to her soul.

Neville returned just after the conversation ended, and sat back in his seat, Harry got up and sat next to Hermione then he gently took hold of her hand.

Neville’s eyes widened as he watched them holding hands fingers interlaced.

“I just asked Hermione to be my girlfriend,” Harry explained.

“But suppose you get put in different houses, what will you do then?” Neville asked.

“We won’t be put in different houses, we’ll all be in Gryffindor, when it comes to the sorting they put a hat on your head and the hat picks the house for you. Well you can tell it the house where you want to go, if it argues you tell it you won’t accept its decision,” Harry chuckled at their looks.

“How on earth do you know that?” Hermione asked.

“Well I’m not supposed to, but Hagrid talks in his sleep, I asked him about it in between his great snores and he told me the whole thing.” Harry told them.

“So we will all be in Gryffindor, the Gryffindor three,” Neville laughed  
“My Gran will be shocked.”

“Neville, can I call you Nev, anyway you tell your Gran, you’re the best friend of Harry Potter, and then she’ll be shocked.” Hermione chuckled.

The rest of the train ride was spent getting ready, changing into school robes and preparing their trunks. On the platform Harry and Hermione walked hand in hand toward the huge man Harry said was Hagrid, the first person ever to treat him kindly. They joined the rest of the first years as they followed Hagrid to the boats that would take them on to Hogwarts.

The oohs and aahs that echoed around the lake at the first sight of Hogwarts reminded Harry of his first sight of the place he had called home. The feeling in his stomach was the same as it had always been before. He was home again.

## Chapter Two.

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The sorting.

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Hermione sat on the stool and the hat was placed on her head, dropping well past her eyes.

'Ah what have we here, intelligent, highly intelligent, brave too, I think Ravenclaw maybe, yes Rav...'

The hat stopped as Hermione thought 'Oh no you don't, I want to go into Gryffindor no arguments please'

'But I always decide, the intelligent ones go in Ravenclaw' the hat complained

'Well if I'm intelligent, then obviously I know what I'm on about, now if you don't mind can we get on with putting me in Gryffindor thank you' Hermione thought giving the hat no alternative.

'Bossy as well, alright, "Gryffindor." The hat announced

Hermione triumphantly marched to the Gryffindor table and waited for Harry, 'He's rather clever is Harry, and he's my boyfriend' she thought as she sat down.

When Neville's turn came he was nervous but insistent when the hat wanted to put him in Hufflepuff. He joined Hermione at the Gryffindor table, "Knows his stuff does our Harry," he said to her as they waited for Harry's turn.

When the hat was set on Harry's head, it never even got time to speak, 'As the sole heir to Gryffindor you will place me in Gryffindor' Harry thought as soon as the hat touched him.

‘What ever is happening this year, students coming here demanding things’

‘Well if you want to spend half an hour sorting out my ancestry, I don’t mind sitting here, but I assure you I am the heir to the great Gryffindor, it’s up to you’ Harry thought amused at the idea of the hat taking so long to sort him.

“Gryffindor.” The hat yelled out ‘oh would you let the castle know I’m here’ Harry thought just before the hat was removed. “She knows,” the now unhappy hat grumbled.

Harry strode over to the Gryffindor table, where Hermione was waiting, as he reached her, she in her enthusiasm jumped up and placed what was meant to be a quick little kiss on his lips. An amazing thing happened when her lips met his. First their lips stuck as if glued, then a blue white light began to grow around them, getting brighter and stronger by the second.

“Wahs appin arry” Hermione asked trying to talk while her lips were glued to his

“Ont nooo” he replied just as confused as she was. He had thought it would take him weeks maybe even months perhaps near to two years before he kissed Hermione, and here she was glued to his face in the first hour at school.

There was a sudden flash of gold light and everyone in the great hall was knocked from their seats, Harry still stuck to Hermione decided the kiss needed to be a proper one and to enjoy the moment so he kissed her properly, when he did their lips became free but they continued the kiss for a short while. While the light around them seemed to melt away, people began to pick themselves up from the floor and dust themselves off before sitting back in their places looking confused about what had happened.

“Harry, I don’t think you two should kiss indoors if that’s what happens.” Neville chuckled.

Hermione stood a glazed look in her eyes; “Wow!” was all she managed to say.

Harry figured they had just become a bonded couple, they were by all accounts now married. He had never expected anything like this though, he could feel Hermione. He felt her emotions, felt her thoughts, her magic, and he knew they shared everything. He knew she would share his magic, his magic that was more powerful than Merlins, more powerful than any wizard had ever known before.

Albus Dumbledore righted himself in his chair then quickly scanned the great hall no one seemed to be injured by the release of so much raw magic and he felt grateful, he had only ever read about such things and had never even dared hope to see it. It pleased him even more to know it was Harry Potter that the magic seemed to emanate from. Steadying himself he looked to see that there were still several students to be sorted. “If you could continue,” he said to professor McGonagall.

Albus looked down at Harry and Hermione, she looked almost euphoric as she stood there a huge smile on her face and her eyes glazed over. Albus searched his memory ‘ah yes Granger, Hermione, or should I say Potter, Hermione, well this is most unexpected’

Harry managed to pull himself together and separated himself from the hug he and Hermione were still in. catching hold of her hands he helped her to sit down. “Hermione, Hermione, come on Hermione,” he said as he stroked her cheek.

Hermione blinked and looked at Harry, “I heard people in films say that the earth shook when they kissed someone, but I thought it was just a figure of speech. Did you feel it Harry?”

Harry looked around the hall “Everyone felt it,” he said stifling a laugh at the look of shock on her face.

“Everyone?”

"Yes seems we knocked everyone from their seats, including the professors," Harry laughed quietly. "Boy when you kiss Hermione, you really pack a wallop."

"I never kissed a boy before," she said shyly

"Well if that's what happens I don't think I'll be letting you kiss any other boy, ever," Harry laughed just a little louder.

"Well I think it was you, and if I so much as catch you thinking of kissing another girl, I'll hex you both into next week," Hermione said joining in with his laughter.

Albus looked down on the exchange going on between his two new students and wondered if they knew what had happened, he doubted Harry would know. Living as he did with those Muggles, Miss Granger is from a Muggle family as well so he didn't think they would have a clue. As the sorting finally finished the headmaster stood and a deathly hush fell on the hall.

"Welcome back to all you who have previously trodden these hallowed halls and to those of you who are new welcome to this fountain of knowledge. I bid you all welcome, and I hope you will fill your heads with the knowledge available. I have a few announcements to make but I will leave those till after the feast as we seem to be a little behind today. Do enjoy your food, tuck in."

Both Harry and Hermione helped them selves to the food, chatting with Neville and others close enough to hear. The meal was soon ended and as the head master rose to give out the notices, professor McGonagall approached Harry.

"Mr Potter you and the young lady please accompany me," she said quietly

Harry found himself and Hermione waiting in the headmaster's office, "Do you think we are in trouble Harry?" Hermione wondered.

"I can't see why it's not like we planned to knock everyone over," Harry reassured her.

Albus entered the office with a smile on his face, he did love to surprise his pupils and if he was not mistaken the two waiting for him were in for quite a large surprise. Harry and Hermione were asked to sit when professor Dumbledore entered. Together they sat in the large armchairs sitting in front of the large desk.

Albus walked slowly around his desk, taking his seat just as slowly he looked at Harry then Hermione, clearing his throat he began.

“Welcome to my office Mr and Mrs Potter, I do hope you are both comfortable,”

Hermione was sure she could not have heard right, the headmaster had just called her Mrs Potter. “Hmm... Excuse me sir but you just called me Mrs Potter.”

“Quite right, I do believe in using ones title correctly,” Dumbledore said with a chuckle; he was enjoying himself.

Harry sat with his mouth open, hoping he looked sufficiently shocked to convince both Dumbledore and Hermione that he had no clue as to what was happening.

“But my name sir is Granger, Hermione Granger,” Hermione tried to point out.

“Ah that was true before the sorting, and that little kiss that caused such a stir,” Albus said smiling at her.

Hermione looked at Harry who looked totally lost, “Say something Harry,” she pleaded.

“I, er, what, I’m just a little confused, you called us Mr and Mrs Potter.” was all Harry said. Hermione rolled her eyes, fat lot of help that was.

“Perhaps I should explain Mrs Potter. You are what we call soul-mates. In the wizarding world when two soul-mates unite they become man and wife, it is a legally binding marriage and will have

been registered at the records office of the ministry of magic. It is also a legally binding marriage in the eyes of the power of the universe. So Hermione from this day forward, and for all eternity you are Mrs Harry James Potter, it is what the Muggles call a marriage made in heaven.” Albus really was enjoying this.

“According to previous fated couples or soul-mates, you will find that you now share everything including your magic. So which ever one of you was the stronger magically will be a little stronger and the weaker of the two of you will become so much stronger.” Albus smiled at Hermione's shock.

“Now would one of you like to tell me exactly what happened, I, like everyone else was caught off guard and did not see exactly what it was that tried to place me on the floor.” The headmaster finished.

“Well when Harry got sorted into Gryffindor I got a little excited and gave him a little, or what was meant to be a little peck of a kiss, our lips seemed to stick together and...” Hermione went on to tell Albus all she had felt and seen.

“Amazing, simply amazing.” He said looking at them.

Three Hermione's temper.

"So what happened in the hall means that I am, at the age of eleven, nearly twelve, married to Harry. Well for some reason I think that might not be as scary as it sounds. I have a husband to look after, but at least we will have plenty of time to get to know each other, just as soon as we are shown our rooms," Hermione said after the headmaster had bid them goodbye and they were standing at the door.

"Your trunks have been sent up to your dormitories, if you ask one of the prefects they will show you the way to your towers." Dumbledore said as he walked toward his own quarters.

Hermione turned back into the room. "Excuse me sir, but it says in Hogwarts a History that married couples get their own quarters. If we are married as you say then obviously we should be treated just like any other married couple. Now according to Hogwarts a History each tower has several married quarters, if you could just let us know which one will be ours."

Harry felt a sudden burst of pride in his wife, the woman chosen for him by the fates, he saw the fire, passion, and determination in her, this was the part of Hermione that had been lost during her twenty years as a Weasley.

Dumbledore stopped in his tracks "Hogwarts a History, it says that does it?" he asked.

"Yes, well as headmaster you have no doubt read it and..." Hermione stopped speaking as the headmaster blushed a little.

"Yes well, that is to say, Hogwarts a History eh? Married quarters? Er, if you could just wait in the Gryffindor common room. I will of coarse have your head of house come and show you to your rooms," now off you go Dumbledore muttered.

'I never knew anyone actually read that book,' Dumbledore thought 'still Harry will be so much happier there than with those evil Dursleys'.

Harry was just pulling the door closed when Hermione stopped him and barged back in to the heads office, her face was turning red and Harry could almost feel the steam coming from her ears. "YOU KNEW!" she shouted at Dumbledore. "YOU KNEW AND YOU DID NOTHING!"

Albus Percival Brian Wulfric Dumbledore headmaster of Hogwarts, head of the Wizengamont, greatest wizard alive, found himself whirling to face Mrs Hermione Jane Potter and it had nothing to do with him. Looking down he found his feet at least two feet from the floor. He could feel a powerful magic that enveloped him and drew him closer to one really angry eleven year old witch.

"Hermione!" Harry was saying as he felt the surge of power leave her "Hermione, please put the headmaster down."

Harry's calming voice reached Hermione and she turned to look at him. "He knows about the Dursleys and how they treat you," she almost wept.

Dumbledore was actually feeling a little scared by her power and realised he needed to say something before she got any angrier than she was and completely lost control. "Harry, Hermione is correct, I do know that the Dursleys did not wish you to attend this school. I also know they never showed you much love, and I apologise for that but it is the safest place for you to be," Dumbledore admitted hoping his declaration of the truth might calm Hermione.

Seconds later he fell back to the floor, as Hermione pointed to Harry. "Take that shirt off Harry," she commanded.

Harry never got the chance to take his shirt off as his clothes removed themselves from his torso and fell to the floor.

"Now turn around and show him your back, I know you said don't tell anyone, but he knows he just doesn't know how bad it really is." She told him.

Harry turned away from the headmaster and waited for his reaction, it was one he would never in a hundred years have expected from the old professor.

“Oh Shit!” Dumbledore gasped as he looked at Harry’s back “what have I done?”

Harry bent down and picked up his shirt, “This beating was not as bad as some I had,” he told them as he put his robes back on. “I intended to repay them someday, I mean I only found out this treatment wasn’t normal by sneaking a look at the Dursleys TV when they went out for their day trips.”

Hermione was crying, she had seen his back before, but since their marriage she could feel Harry’s emotions, she could hear some of his thoughts and he was remembering all the beatings he had received at the hands of his only family. She turned to Dumbledore “You did this to him, you and your self importance, your I know best attitude.”

Dumbledore was realising as she spoke that she was reading his thoughts even though he always had his strongest guards up to prevent such intrusions into his mind, and he also saw that she was doing it with no effort at all. What she was doing would completely drain even the most powerful wizard he knew. He was astonished by the power she wielded, but he somehow knew she was not using all she had, and Harry was her source. ‘Magically Harry must be even greater than the great Merlin’ Dumbledore thought.

Dumbledore was trying to think about what he had done and what could be done for Harry. Harry obviously could not be left with the Dursleys. Hermione was liable to blast them into next week if they ever laid a hand on Harry again, she might still do them a serious bit of harm for how they had already treated him. Dumbledore knew she would not do it on purpose but at the moment she had not yet learned to control the fantastic amount of power she possessed.

“Harry will live at my parent’s house, we will place our own protection thank you sir,” Hermione said in answer to his thoughts.

Harry then surprised him by asking, “Could I see Madam Pomfrey please sir?”

Dumbledore happy about this reprieve from Hermione’s anger readily agreed to Harry’s request, “While you are at the hospital wing, I will have your trunks placed into your quarters.”

Harry nodded then caught hold of Hermione’s hand and led her from the office and up to see Madam Pomfrey the school healer. They discussed the things Hermione had done in Dumbledore’s office as they walked, Harry had to admit that their marriage must have increased their magic “We need to find a way to control it,” he told her as they entered the hospital wing.

Harry showed Madam Pomfrey his back, then he asked if she might have something that would counteract the years of starvation diets and beatings, with a tear in her eye Madam Pomfrey told Harry about a very old potion that was developed sometime in what the Muggles called the dark ages, apparently many students then would turn up at the school malnourished and weak boned, the potion was used to repair the damage and to bring the students to their correct size and weight, it would take her two days to brew the potion as it was rarely used anymore.

She healed his back and gave him a gentle kiss on his forehead as he left, he was a little surprised as she had never done that before, but then he remembered no one had seen his back last time. Arriving in the common room Harry thought about professor Quirell and Voldemort, he was ready for him now, he had a plan and he would use his magic and Hermione’s remarkable brain to rid them of both Quirell and his guest, just a few minutes later professor McGonagall entered through the portrait hole.

“Mr Potter, Mrs Potter, the headmaster has asked me to allocate one of the married quarters to you. I find the fact you are soul bonded absolutely fascinating maybe you could tell me all about it at sometime, meanwhile follow me please.”

McGonagall walked toward the blank wall next to the fire place “Two for Gryffindor,” she said just before a door appeared, she led the way

up a small winding stair to the top floor, "This will be your quarters, the entire floor is yours, now as head of house I must ask you not to misuse this privilege with raucous parties and such like. You will find your trunks in the living room, now if there is nothing else I will bid you goodnight," with that she left them and went back down the stairway.

Together Harry and Hermione explored their rooms, "It's a small self contained flat," she said as they finished their tour, living room, study, bathroom, kitchen, small dining room, and a rather nice bedroom. Harry got a little nervous as he looked at the bed, only one bed, a double, they would be sleeping together.

As Hermione began to unpack their things, Harry heard someone calling from the stairway, "That'll be Nev," Hermione guessed as he went to the door, once at the top of the stairs he called down.

"Come on up Nev, you wont believe what's happened," he called to his new best friend.

Neville arrived followed by three other boys'. "Sorry about this," Neville indicated over his shoulder, "they just wanted to see why the great Harry Potter gets a special room."

Right behind Neville stood Ron Weasley, behind him was Seamus Finnegan and Dean Thomas. No longer worried about Ron and Hermione ever getting together Harry led the way into the living room "You best come in and take a seat," he said as he looked to see where Hermione was.

"So how come the great Potter gets a private room, and the rest of us have to live in a dorm?" Ron asked.

"That would be because we are married," Hermione said coming from the bedroom. "I've made the bed love," she said winking at Harry.

Harry knew immediately that Hermione had taken a dislike to Ronald Bilius Weasley, and was a little surprised until he remembered that Ron had been rather cruel to her the last time, 'maybe she can sense the cruelty in him this time, what with all her new power' he thought

as he sat down and Hermione sat in his lap then wriggled to get comfortable.

Talking to Neville and ignoring Ron's repeated interruptions Hermione told them what had happened in the great hall, and how Dumbledore told them that they were now Mr and Mrs Potter for all eternity. She told them how she had read about rooms for married couples in Hogwarts a History, all of the boys gave her a funny look at her admission to having read the book.

"Am I the only one who ever read Hogwarts a History?" she asked. She was answered by five voices in unison as they all said "Yes."

Harry showed the boys around the flat, getting several suggestive remarks about the bedroom. Once the impromptu tour was over Hermione suggested rather strongly that the boys went to their own dorms and got some sleep "After all it will be a busy day tomorrow," she told them "Harry and I have to go to bed, even if you don't."

Neville ushered the others from the room and wished them goodnight as he pulled the door closed. Harry decided they should place a password on the door to prevent unwanted interruptions.

Harry told Hermione about Quirell, saying he had sensed something wrong with the professor, something really dark, suggesting that he could be possessed by what remained of Voldemort. Being a Muggle born Hermione only knew what she had read about the evil dark wizard, so Harry told her that while everyone thought that he had already killed Voldemort when he was a baby he had in fact only managed to separate Voldemort's soul from his body, he thought it was this that had entered the willing body of Quirell.

Hermione promised to think the problem through and let him know as soon as she had thought of anyway to remove or destroy the dark wizard's soul.

Harry also told her that as the wife of the heir to Gryffindor she could control the castle, and the castle ghosts, if she told it too the castle would lock or open any door for her without a password. This little bit

of information quite surprised her because according to her books nobody knew who the true heir was if there was one. There was of course the bonus of being able to enter the library when ever she wanted to.

Harry followed Hermione into their bedroom a little hesitantly. The coming week was going to be a very busy time for them both and they still needed to get to know each other, though with the memories of another life it was practically the second time around for Harry, he had never had the chance to sleep with her before. In fact he had never slept with anyone before although it had been one of his first teenage sex fantasies to see Hermione lying naked in his bed.

Looking brave Hermione walked boldly into the bedroom though she was in fact shaking with nerves, she had decided that as they were married and they were to be sharing a bed and the rest of their lives then she may as well push her nerves aside and get the first embarrassment over and done with, the sooner the better she thought.

She watched him as she began to take off her clothes and she could feel his nervousness, "Come on Harry we have to do this sometime, if we are going to be together forever we might as well get it over with. Unless you want to grow up and become old and wrinkled without ever having a family."

"That's alright for you, you're a girl, and it doesn't effect girls or show up in quite the same way it effects boys," Harry grumbled, he knew what could happen to his young body even if he was only eleven years old.

"It's ok Harry, mum told me all about the birds and the bees quite a while ago so I know what to expect," she chuckled.

"Yeah well no laughing, I'm not finished growing yet," he said without thinking.

"I won't laugh Harry I'm just as nervous as you are," she admitted. Harry felt a touch better hearing her admit it.

Five minutes later Harry learned something he had not known or noticed the last time, Hermione actually had breasts, they were not very big and were hidden by her robes but she definitely had some small breasts, she also had a small patch of hair between her legs. Taking a deep breath and deciding if she could be that brave then so could he, he slowly removed his own clothes.

“I like to sleep naked,” Hermione said as she neatly folded her clothes “you won’t mind will you Harry.”

“I think I might like that,” he chuckled as he looked at her again, “in fact I think I will be doing the same from now on.”

## Chapter four

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Harry. Snape, and the argument.

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Harry lay in the bed barely daring to move, though he had managed to get past seeing Hermione naked ok, she was after all just a young girl and though she had just begun to develop he managed to convince himself she was not much different to boys yet, apart from the more obvious extras, oh and the missing bits.

He was however rather worried about touching her, not knowing what she might like or dislike, or worse still what she might do if while asleep he touched her somewhere he shouldn't. So he lay as still as he could barely breathing. Suddenly he could feel the bed begin to shake, Hermione suddenly unable to hold it in any longer burst out laughing.

"You said you wouldn't laugh," Harry moaned.

"I'm not laughing at you Harry, well I am but not why you think I am," she laughed finding the look he gave her tickling her even more.

"Well what's so funny then?" he pouted.

"Look Harry I'm as nervous as you are, right, but at least I'm trying to relax," Hermione said sitting up. "Look at your self you look like a statue, you haven't moved a muscle since we got in the bed. Now if the same thing happened to you that has happened to me there is nothing to be nervous about. I can feel your emotions. I can hear some of your thoughts. I can, if I concentrate hard see what you see through your eyes. I can feel what you feel, so tell me Harry how many couples know each other that well. How am I supposed to sleep when you are so tense? I won't bite you if you touch me, and I won't break or anything. Oh and no I am not usually this brave, I just think if we are to be together for all time, then we should get over the

embarrassing parts quickly, besides its not like we are going to have sex yet is it.”

“I don’t think I’m old enough for that yet,” Harry said grinning a little.

“Well let’s lie down, you can put your arm around me and for pete’s sake relax a little, and get some sleep.” She said as she turned her back to him and shuffled back a little.

Harry ended up with no real choice, he either did as she said, or he fell off the bed, not wanting Hermione to laugh at him again he put his arm around her then without thinking he pulled her tight to his chest. ‘Hermione’s right of course, we need to get past the shyness, I don’t even know why I am shy, true it’s hard to remember the last time I kissed a woman, it can’t be much more than a hundred and twenty years ago’. Harry thought as he drifted to sleep.

Harry knew he was dreaming and tried to wake himself, he was twenty years old again, Ginny Weasley was on his arm as they walked down the aisle, reaching the alter they split up. Ginny moved to one side while he moved to Ron’s right, they all stood there waiting, then Hermione walked down the aisle. She was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen, she joined Ron at the alter and gave Harry a quick glance, it was in that one second during that glance that he knew he truly loved her, not as a friend but as the woman who had taken his heart. He thought he had seen love in her eyes as she had glanced at him, but when he was awake he was never sure, it was only in his dreams did that glance replay itself showing the love, the sorrow, and the regret. She said ‘I do’ to Ron, that was the day Harry finally began to actually hate Ronald Weasley.

He was standing at the door of the Burrow Hermione hugged him a little longer than was normal and then kissed his cheek, he heard the whisper he heard every time he had the dream, but this time he heard the words, words whispered so quietly his conscious mind had missed them “I’ll always love you Harry,” his heart was ripping into a thousand pieces as she left for her honeymoon with Ron.

The next morning again he stood at the Burrow door; it would be the last time. Ginny tried to kiss him, but he was dying inside, he gave

her a peck on her cheek and said “Goodbye Gin,” it was the last time he had kissed a woman. Harry jerked awake tears falling down his face, he had been crying in his sleep. It was the first time he had had the nightmare for a good many years.

Hermione awoke to find him sitting up fresh tear stains showing on his cheeks in the moonlight. Sitting up with him she pulled him into a hug and held him tight, “You want to tell me about it?” she asked.

Harry told her it was just a nightmare, and he concentrated on the Dursleys, Hermione thought he had been reliving his beating “Don’t worry Harry; it’ll never happen again I promise you.”

Still hugging her, his chest pressed against hers, they lay back down and fell asleep, wrapped in her arms he slept soundly. Hermione whispered as she heard his breathing change to a slow rhythmic pace, “I wont let them hurt you again, you’re mine to look after now.”

Hermione lay awake, she had had a dream, a bad dream, she walked down the aisle, when she reached the alter she could not reach Harry, some one stood in her way, she had woken up then to find Harry crying in his sleep, she thought of waking him but then he jerked awake again and sat up. She knew the dream she had seen was shared with Harry, she just didn’t understand it. In the dream she had seen the love he had for her, his eyes had pleaded with her. She had felt the deep love she had for him, she had wanted to say no, but she had said ‘I do’ to the other man. She pulled Harry closer, hung on tighter to him, she was confused by the dream, but she knew no one would ever stand between her and Harry, her love for him was just beginning to blossom and take root.

The next morning they dressed quickly though neither was feeling embarrassed or shy, their night spent holding each other tight had begun to finalise the bond they had. Hand in hand they made their way down to the great hall for breakfast. Neville was saving two seats for them and they quickly joined him.

“Did you get any sleep? and I am not being rude or crude,” Neville asked them. “I just mean with all that happened yesterday.”

"We were a bit shy at first, but we got over that part, then we managed to sleep, it was a bit strange because I never slept with anyone before," Hermione told him honestly.

Just then Ron Weasley walked in and sat down near to Harry. Hermione could feel the hate Harry had for him, he looked a little like the man in her dream but she then dismissed the thought from her mind. They were only half way through their breakfast when an ugly looking, pointy faced boy from Slytherin walked over, his blonde hair was slicked down and his clothes were expensive, Hermione thought he looked like a real creep, she moved a little toward Harry without realising it.

"So Potter, married to a filthy Mud Blood..." was all he managed to say before he was knocked backward by Harry's fist.

Hermione did not know what the term meant but it was obviously nothing nice. She made a mental note to ask Harry about it later. One of the professors rushed over, a short greasy haired man with a rather large hawk like nose. "Potter that will be a detention, tonight at seven," He said without asking what had happened.

Harry stood up and calmly and politely spoke, "Sorry mister but I will not be taking a detention for him or for you," Harry said then he sat back down.

The professor was fuming spluttering and breathing heavy he began to yell "How dare you talk to me like that, you will take a whole months detention for your insolence, Potter."

Harry stood again and spoke calmly "I just told you I will not do a detention for him or for you," then he sat down again.

By now everyone within earshot, which considering the professor was yelling and going red in the face, was just about everyone in the hall, were all listening intently to the exchange, whispers of 'what did Potter say' could be heard.

"HOW DARE YOU..." spluttered the professor.

Hermione sat in total disbelief as she listened to the exchange, she would never have thought to defy a professor.

“Don’t even finish that sentence if you are thinking what I think you are,” Harry said again calmly.

Just then alerted by the school portraits the headmaster entered the great hall. The professor was still yelling at Harry, spittle flying all around him, as he fumed he had never been defied before and for one of the first year students to do it in the great hall was unthinkable. It was even worse when it was coming from a boy he had hated before he had even met him.

Dumbledore arrived at the table to find a red faced angry professor Snape and a very calm Harry Potter. “Would someone care to enlighten me as to what is going on?” Dumbledore asked in his gentle tone.

“I assigned Potter a detention and he defied me and refused to do it,” Snape said with an evil grin.

“Is this true Mr Potter?”

Harry stood yet again “Yes sir,” he answered.

“Would you care to enlighten me as to why you refused to do a detention,” Dumbledore asked politely.

“You won’t like my answer sir,” Harry said equally politely.

“I’m afraid then Mr Potter I must insist on you telling me, whether I like your answer or not,” Dumbledore said just a touch less calm, he had seen Hermione’s power and he was well aware just how much more Harry might have.

“To start with I will not have that slime ball on the floor insulting my wife, and I will most definitely not be taking any unjust punishment from a dead beat cheat who can not teach, and constantly favours his own house to the detriment of others. Also I will not allow him to

continue to take house points from anyone unjustly, if you don't believe me try it." Harry said again calmly.

Dumbledore was at a loss, he had never in all his years come across some one so determined and yet as seemingly calm as Harry Potter. His accusations against Snape were only heard in whispers before; nobody had actually voiced them out loud before. He was saved from embarrassment by Harry, when Harry asked to be taken to the headmaster's office.

Harry asked Hermione to accompany him, as he followed Dumbledore and Snape with McGonagall following behind. Once they were in the office Snape began instantly demanding that Harry be expelled.

"Excuse me Mr Snape," Harry said politely as Snape was yelling.

"I could stop you ever teaching another lesson in this school starting today, so unless you begin to show a little civility I will close this castle down to you." Harry hissed his anger beginning to show.

Dumbledore stared at Harry, only the heir of Gryffindor could close down the school, surely Harry wasn't was he. Then it dawned on him that only the true heir would know it could be done. Dumbledore asked them all to calm down and sit, once they were all fairly comfortable he asked Harry for some explanations.

"The castle speaks to me, it tells me of Snapes illegal teaching methods. Like using legilimens on his pupils. He allows his Slytherin's to sabotage the work of other students. If a student is better than those in his own house, he does the sabotage himself. He constantly takes away house points illegally; he will find that impossible in future should you try to retain him. His entire teaching method consists of a few lines of writing on the blackboard never offering assistance or advice yet constantly degrading and insulting any students not in Slytherin." Harry paused for a few moments. "Oh and by the way the man said he hates me even though he never even met me before, he is to stupid to realise I am not my father, and no matter how much he loved my mother she could never have loved him an evil shit like him."

Harry paused again then added as if an after thought.

“Now as for Malfoy he called my wife a mud blood, he is extremely lucky he is able to stand, if you wish for evidence I am willing to show you my memory of the event, you may wish to warn Mr Malfoy that I have told the castle to protect my wife from him, any attempt to harm her by anyone in anyway could have dire results on him.” Harry stopped abruptly and sat next to Hermione who was sitting open mouthed. Through all the shouting and insults Harry had looked perfectly calm, any one else would look angry or frightened, but not her Harry, he did feel the slightest bit nervous, but she could feel his calmness beneath the anger.

Dumbledore sat looking at Harry, not quite sure what to say to the young man, he had heard all the rumours about Snapes teaching methods, but he had wanted Snape kept close so he could keep an eye on him. Now he felt sure that somehow Harry knew that Snape had been the one to betray his parents. If Snape remained in the castle how long would it be before he pushed the wrong button and then young Mr Potter would exact a swift justice, he was sure about it. There was an unbelievable amount of power in the small undernourished frame that was Harry Potter.

“I’ve been telling you for years that’s how Slytherin always wins the house cup, it’s with his favouritism, his poor teaching methods are preventing good students from getting the grades they deserve, now even the castle is complaining,” McGonagall told the headmaster.

Dumbledore did not fail to notice Minerva’s acceptance of Mr Potter’s claim to be the heir of the great Gryffindor without question. But then why would she, like all the teachers she knew that the castle would know the heir, and would do as he commanded while doing all it could to protect him and his family; he was after all the true and legal owner of Hogwarts castle.

In the midst of all this Poppy Pomfrey the school Healer knocked on the door, marched in and offered Harry a potion, “I was able to get some delivered, now drink it all back, that’s good, now you may feel a few odd pains over the next two days or so but it is nothing to worry

about, in around forty eight hours or so you will be fully restored and what would have been your normal size will have been attained, I will see you again in two days Mr Potter." With that she gave Dumbledore an evil look scowled at him then walked back out of the office.

## Chapter five.

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Quirrell.

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Harry watched as Madam Pomfrey walked out of the office, he was wondering what to do next, he had not intended to say anything about Snape, but once the incident with Malfoy had escalated, Harry after eighty years as headmaster of Hogwarts in his other reality he had decided he would take none of the previous bad attitude from the potions professor.

Dumbledore was sitting listening to McGonagall who was still angry and wanting to know what was going to be done with Snape. It seemed to Harry that both professors' had overlooked the fact that the castle itself would no longer support Snape, and without the help of the actual building any teacher would find things difficult, Snape would not last long, he felt sure about it. For now though Harry was faced with a much bigger problem, he was thinking hard about Quirrell and how to bring about his downfall without having to go through all the same things they went through before, for a start he no longer had Weasley to get them past the enchanted giant chess set and he himself was still not to good at the game.

Harry sat next to Hermione and thought about Quirrell, recalling all he could about the man; he was a professor that most definitely should not be teaching at Hogwarts. Harry's problem was, if he could think of nothing himself then how was he to tell the headmaster what he knew, after all he could hardly say to him, a hundred odd years ago I encountered Quirrell, who just happened to have Voldemort sticking out of the back of his head hidden by that ridiculous turban. He was still stuck for away around the problem when he was saved by Hermione.

“Professor Dumbledore sir, what would you do if you were a student and you suspected that Voldemort was in the castle, would you tell

someone or would you try to deal with it your self?" she suddenly asked without warning.

Dumbledore looked at Hermione as though she had just thrown a glass of ice cold water in his face, "I take it you have a reason for asking such an odd question Mrs Potter?" he said staring at her.

Hermione shifted a little uncomfortably in her chair looking at Harry, before Harry said, quietly continuing where Hermione left off. "When we arrived at the castle, something odd happened, I could almost hear the castle, but it was more a feeling really, its hard to describe, but what I do know is that there is a professor Quirrell in the castle and Voldemort is using him, something under his turban is possessing him I suppose you would call it." Harry hoped he would have to lie no further, he remembered Snape was suspicious of Quirrell and hoped that and his own revelation would be sufficient for them to take some action.

Dumbledore and Snape acted almost as one, "I will relay the message that you wish to speak to Quirrell and return with him," Snape said before Dumbledore had spoken, it quite surprised Harry for a while then he remembered that both the professors were proficient at both legilimens and Occlumens.

"Sir, shall I take Hermione back to the common room," Harry asked wanting her out of harms way.

"Yes, yes, off you go," Dumbledore said ushering them out of the door with professor Snape.

Half way down the stairs Snape said "Mr Potter I apologise for jumping to conclusions, I was wrong."

Before Harry could wrap his mind around Snape admitting to how he was wrong, and also apologising the professor had rushed off. Harry stood on the step wondering if maybe the explosion at the ministry had done more harm than he thought, 'maybe I bumped my head and all this is just some fantastic dream.

Hermione had been deep in thought about the implications of Voldemort being within the castle walls, she could see just how dangerous that was, even though she had never heard of the madman till just a few very short weeks ago. She caught the end of Harry's thoughts about it all being a dream, "I don't think both of us bumped our heads Harry, I heard what the professor said, I don't really know him but it did seem to be out of character from what I have seen."

"You can say that again," Harry said as they resumed their journey to the common room.

Snape caught up with Quirrell just as he was about to begin his first class of the day, telling him "The headmaster wishes to talk to you about that Potter boy, the boy who lived has refused to accept a detention with me and I suspect that Dumbledore wants you to take the detention class." Quirrell believed Snape and made his way to the headmaster's office with Snape following behind.

Harry learned later that during a brief fight Quirrell had died, Voldemort or what was left of him had escaped into the forest. Harry wondered if it was quite as easy to change the future as he had thought it would be.

The next two and a half days were rather painful for Harry as Madam Pomfrey's potion kicked in and seemed determined to cause him as much pain as was possible. He felt as though he had overdosed on skellygrow as the pains of rapid growth travelled around his body, he found the most uncomfortable time was as his chest grew, seemingly waiting until after all other parts of his body had stopped their mad rush to send him skyward. By the end of the forty eight hour period Harry was really looking forward to some respite, and to catching up on some much needed sleep. His body though did not appear to keep time as well as he did and he was still in pain from his legs and arms by mid day on the third day, every thing began to ease off during the lunch hour and by two in the afternoon all the pain was gone. Harry had grown nearly four and a half inches and was now as tall as Ron Weasley.

"If you keep growing you may actually fit into those clothes you have to wear," Hermione joked.

"I could do with some proper clothes, you know stuff bought for me and not Dudley's hand me downs," Harry complained as he tried to make himself look a little tidier for the rest of the day's lessons. Hermione promised that they would go shopping during their first holiday.

Snape changed the way he ran his class as instructed by Dumbledore but he was just as nasty and miserable as he had always been, he may have even been just a little more miserable Harry thought one day during their potions class when Snape forgot himself and tried to take ten house points off Neville for no reason other than he felt like it. The result was a low rumble from the walls of the dungeon, and a rather disappointed look from Snape.

At the end of the first two weeks into the his first term at Hogwarts, Harry was faced with a problem he had not encountered in his last life, Hermione's twelfth birthday was on the nineteenth, and he had absolutely no idea what to buy her or even where to buy something.

Harry's problem was solved when he heard a fifth year asking his friends if they would be willing to buy one of his fathers new book bags, you can put as many as fifty books in the bag and it won't get any heavier than if you had just the one, apparently it has an automatic shrinking charm on it.

Harry asked the boy if he could get him one of the bags before the weekend and to keep it quiet, he did not want Hermione finding out too soon. On the Thursday having had an idea he sent Hedwig with a request for a rather special book, one that Hermione had not found until she was nineteen in the other time line, a book she had constantly referred too as the best book she ever read. Flourish and Blotts found him their very last copy from somewhere in the store room, it arrived at teatime on Saturday.

Tuesday morning arrived and Harry met with Neville in the common room before disappearing up to the first year boy's dorm leaving Hermione still in their quarters. A rather hurried wrapping session

followed as both boys wrapped their presents before going down to meet Hermione for breakfast.

Hermione was about as happy as she had ever been, it was her birthday and she had friends but more much more she had a husband to look after. She had never made any friends at her old school, it seemed nobody liked you if you loved books and learning, so like Harry had she grown up lonely, but today on her twelfth birthday she had best friends in Harry and Nev, friends who really liked her for herself, she would never be lonely again. For the first time in her life she was truly happy she was a girl.

Down stairs in the dorm, she knew that her two boys would be waiting for her, hopefully with a birthday card each, she did not expect any presents, after all there was no place to buy them here at school. Walking what she hoped was gracefully down the stairs to the common room she found both boys sitting by the fire apparently watching a game of chess between the eldest and youngest of the Weasleys, Percy who had taught the game to Ron was only just holding his own.

As soon as Harry saw her he walked over to her and gave her what she called one of 'those' kisses, he had only kissed her four times like that but when he did, she was left breathless and incoherent for several minutes.

"Happy birthday sweetheart," He said as he stepped back and offered her, her presents. Hermione seemed amazed at the bag and instantly transferred her books to it, Harry was grateful for the fact that she would no longer walk around with the weight of so many books, she always seemed to carry twice as many as the other students. Neville gave her a book on plants and a hand made card both of which she liked.

When she unwrapped the book Harry had given her she had not known what to expect, as she read the title she knew it must be a rare book and it must have cost a small fortune, had it been any other day she may well have told him off for wasting money, but as it was the first of her birthdays they were sharing she put the thought from her mind.

Hermione read the title 'Manuscripts of Merlin' inside on the first leaf she found the words that were to please her. To Mrs Hermione Jane Potter, greatest witch of the millennium, love from your husband Harry. Hermione threw herself at Harry and hugged him for all she was worth, then she gave Harry one of 'those' kisses, the lasting memorable sort.

## Chapter six

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Sirius.

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It was their fourth week at the school and on the Sunday morning Hermione woke to find Harry pacing the room, a huge frown on his face, yet she could not read the thoughts that were bothering him enough for him to be the way he was. 'It would seem that some thoughts are not for sharing, that's sort of good to know, we do at least have some privacy' she thought as she sat up.

"Ok, what is it Harry, what's got you pacing at...?" she looked over at the clock "blimey it's only six."

"Sorry love, I didn't mean to wake you," Harry said sitting on the end of the bed.

"I just felt you were unhappy about something, strange though I didn't know what you were thinking, it felt a little odd after four weeks of being able to know your every thought," Hermione said "still it means we do at least have a little privacy."

"Yes, I noticed the other day, it's odd really and I never mentioned it in case you got the wrong idea," Harry told her smiling a little.

"You should have told me, why was it odd?" she wanted to know.

"Well Nev asked me where you were, and I couldn't feel you or hear your thoughts, so I asked the castle and it informed me you were in the girls toilets, I didn't tell you in case you thought I was trying to spy on you while you went for a, well you know what I mean, so I realised that even the fates thought some things should be private, good thing too, imagine me having to watch all those girls doing their thing, or see them in the changing room," Harry answered with a chuckle.

“Harry Potter if I catch you watching any girl who isn’t me, ‘doing their thing’ as you so delicately put it, you are going to be in a huge pile of trouble,” she laughed.

“So do you want to tell me what the problem is, or are you going to drive me crazy by pacing all day?” Hermione asked suddenly becoming serious.

“Telling you would help, I mean you are so much better at thinking these problems through than I am, the big problem is how to explain it to you in a way that doesn’t make you think you are eternally married to a lunatic,” Harry replied wondering just how he had only had one huge problem ten minutes ago and now he had two.

“Why don’t you just tell me what the problem is first, then you can explain it all afterwards, if you see what I mean,” Hermione offered.

“Yes ok, well the problem is my godfather is in Azkaban. It’s the wizard prison, it’s the worst place on earth, and he’s there for a crime he did not commit. Now my problem is I know who did commit the crime, and I know how to capture him, but if I capture him now it will make catching Voldemort an even harder task than it already is, you see Wormtail, that’s his name, well according to a prophecy I once heard he is supposed to help Voldemort get a new body, then I will have something to get rid of.” Harry finished and looked to see if she thought him mad.

“So you have to decide whether you can leave your godfather in prison, and let this Wormtail go free, well if it was me Harry I would set my godfather free and worry about Voldemort when the time comes,” she said without questioning how he knew these things. It was Harry after all and she knew him, knew his mind, and she knew he was not lying, but she also knew he would never be able to get any rest if he left an innocent man in prison and did nothing to help.

“You know, wife of mine, that you really are the greatest witch of your age,” Harry said proudly “and I promise I will try to explain everything to you one day.”

“I don’t need explanations Harry, I trust you completely,” she told him.

Harry knew she was right, but it would change things, he would lose his advantage of knowing where and when Voldemort would make his move. Still he decided to take her advice, he had fought Voldemort before and won he could do it again, especially now that he was fully capable of using his full magical potential, an amount of magic Dumbledore could only imagine.

Hermione interrupted his thoughts, she was thinking that Harry was thinking of when he had beaten Voldemort as a baby, but his thoughts were a little fuzzy to her, "Just how much magic do we have then Harry?" she asked.

"Well I think we could both be more powerful than even Merlin was," he replied without blinking an eye lid.

"It says in that book you got me that Merlin hardly ever used a wand, he sometimes used his hands but most of the time he did his magic with just a thought, now that's some power," Hermione said as she watched Harry getting dressed.

"Yes just like you did in Dumbledore's office, or had you forgotten that," Harry pointed out.

"I thought that was just more accidental magic, like when I was younger," she told him.

"Try it now, do something just by thinking about it," Harry suggested.

Hermione looked around the room for something to do, then she got out of the bed and thought about it making its self, she then stood there in wonder as it did exactly what she had thought.

"Blimey Harry, it works," she exclaimed wide eyed.

"I thought it would, you should have seen Dumbledore's face when he found himself floating, that's what gave me the idea that our magic has not only combined but it has at least doubled in its strength," he said as he tied his shoe laces, his hands by his side and without even bending down to put his shoes on.

"Handy though," he said chuckling as Hermione's clothes drifted to her from one of the dresser draws.

"I think we should keep quiet about this Harry, we will have to continue using our wands though," Hermione said seriously "it could cause a few problems if the wrong people knew about it.

"You mean Dumbledore, and his 'he knows best attitude'," he said as she smiled at the hair brush following her around brushing her hair as she sorted some books for reading later that day, top of her pile was the book Harry had given her. She had only read a few pages up till now but she had decided they should learn all they could about Merlin and his magic.

"You know there is another useful advantage to our magic," Harry announced as he walked into the shower "you know that no one is sent a reprimand for using under age magic until they have a wand, obviously there must be a trace charm or something that lets the ministry know when a wand is used, well we don't need a wand so we don't have to worry about the ministry detecting our magic during the holidays."

Hermione rolled her eyes trust Harry to think of that one, she picked up his shoes and began to untangle the knots in his laces, he had obviously not concentrated on what he was doing, she made a mental note to point it out to him. Two hours later Harry and Hermione were standing outside Dumbledore's office waiting to be called in, they did not have to wait long before they heard the headmaster bid them enter.

Harry explained that once more he knew the where about's of a criminal who had actually been declared a hero, given a posthumous order of Merlin medal, and his remains, just one finger had been duly buried by his mother.

Harry explained all about Wormtail living in his animagus form of a rat, while Sirius Black was locked up in Azkaban accused of the crime done by the evil little traitor Peter Pettigrew. When Dumbledore had listened to Harry's story he sent for his deputy head Minerva

McGonagall, together they began to arrange for the capture of Pettigrew. Harry suggested that they have several of the Wizengamont there as well as Fudge and his officers, he went on to explain that he did not trust the minister of magic not to try something to cover up the illegal imprisonment of his godfather.

McGonagall wanted to know how it was an illegal imprisonment, and Harry told her that there had never actually been a trial. Sirius had been denied that privilege for ten long years. McGonagall was astonished to learn that it was the truth and that as head of the Wizengamont Dumbledore had known all about it. Her faith in the headmaster took another dip that day just as it had when Poppy Pomfrey had told her about Harry's back and his requirement of the catch-up potion.

Dumbledore agreed with Harry about fudge, but his reasons were different, he was sure that Fudge had been in league with Voldemort but he had never been able to prove it. They sent for several senior wizards that Dumbledore knew could be trusted along with several members of the Order of the Phoenix, they along with a few of the schools professors should be enough for Fudge to declare an instant release of Sirius and his innocence made known to all.

The following morning Dumbledore was sitting behind his desk when Ronald Weasley entered the office, he had been told to bring his pet with him for registration, a new regulation that all pets must undergo. Standing across from the headmaster Ron Weasley was nervous, he had never been in this office before and according to his brothers students only ended up here when they were in trouble.

"Ah Mr Weasley this wont take long, we just need a few details please, could you place your pet into the box behind you please," Dumbledore said to the nervous young boy.

Ron did exactly as he was asked and placed his pet rat Scabbers into the indicated box, not knowing that within minutes he would hate the rat that had once been Percy's pet. Once in the box there was no escape for Pettigrew, he could not disapparate with in the castle walls and he could not escape the box without revealing himself.

Dumbledore had Ron stand at the back of his office as a group of people entered including his own father. Harry Potter led the group in, and took a seat opposite the headmaster.

Dumbledore looked at the gathering, and hoped they were not here on a wild goose chase. Ron wondered why so many people were required for the registration of one pet in the school; surely the ministry had better things to do. He looked at his father who was looking extremely serious, it took a while but Ron eventually realised that there was a little more than just the registering of a pet going on here.

Minister Fudge entered the room along with two Aurors who placed themselves at the door; Fudge seemed shocked by the fact that there were so many other people waiting for him. Once the minister had arrived Dumbledore wand in hand approached the box, looking down on the rat he gave a small smile before casting the charm that would reverse the animagus spell. There was a knock on the door and Remus Lupin entered just as Pettigrew appeared right in front of his eyes. Pettigrew locked eyes with Remus for a second before he began to grovel, declaring he had been hiding from Death Eaters all this time. Harry however stood up and as Dumbledore cast an immobilus charm on Pettigrew Harry took a small phial from his pocket and handed it to Remus, "You should have the pleasure of doing this Sir," he said handing the phial and a list of questions to Remus.

Remus looked questioningly at Harry; it was obvious he had no idea why he had been summoned here.

"Veritaserum, and a few questions for Wormtail," Harry said surprising Remus.

Ten minutes later Peter Pettigrew had answered all the questions on the list Harry had written with the help of Hermione. The senior wizards of the Wizengamont demanded that one of the Aurors leave immediately to facilitate the release of Sirius Black, the minister in the face of so many witnesses could not refuse and he ordered that Black be released immediately.

“The minister will remain here to write an apology to Mr Black and to authorise compensation for illegal imprisonment of my godfather, you will bring him here to this office, we will expect you in four hours,” Harry said to the Auror that was about to leave,

Harry’s voice sounded so authoritative that the Auror answered “Yes sir,” without thinking about it, then he left to do as he was told.

“Sir do we have parchment and ink for the minister, I’m sure he will be happy to see justice done, after all it could cause serious damage to his position if it were known that he condoned the imprisonment of innocent people without a trial or any justice,” Harry asked Dumbledore, who was truly enjoying himself at the way Harry was making use of the situation, he knew Harry would leave no opportunity open for Fudge to get out of this tight little corner.

Dumbledore was absolutely sure Mrs Potter would have given Harry all he needed to come out on top with this one. He just wished he could see Fudge squirm a little more. He was soon to get his wish fulfilled; Fudge wrote a short note saying how the ministry was willing to grant a pardon for Mr Sirius Black then handed it over to Harry. Harry read the parchment then ripped it up and threw it in the waste bin.

“The minister will write a letter of apology to Mr Sirius Black for illegal imprisonment of an innocent man, or would the minister like me to bring in the reporters I have waiting. I think Miss Skeeter should be the first, don’t you,” Harry said looking at Remus.

Remus who was still in shock just nodded.

Harry leant over the minister and whispered in his ear, “I can show proof enough to prove your guilt in this. Enough for you to lose your job, so write a proper apology or else.”

When Fudge turned even paler than he was already, Harry smiled ‘Hermione love, you really are brilliant’ he thought. How she had known he did not care but the suggested threat seemed to be working as Fudge wrote a full apology letter out and signed it, two of

the Wizengamont wizards witnessed it and Dumbledore added his signature as well.

While they waited for Sirius to arrive from Azkaban. Harry sat and talked to Remus, he used the story of the marauders map to explain how he knew about Pettigrew being alive and well. He told Remus about being married to Hermione and promised to introduce them as soon as he could. Harry spent quite some time talking about Hermione and just how brilliant she was.

Ron Weasley was totally forgotten about until his loud snoring began to fill the room, Dumbledore shook him and then sent him of to his dormitory with strict instructions to tell no one what had happened, Ron who's pet turned out to be a mass murderer had no intention of telling any one any thing.

Four and a quarter hours had gone by since the Auror had left, Harry knew that it took around four hours to get someone released in a hurry, he had had to do it before, so he was now getting just a little worried that maybe the Auror had not done as he was told to do. He had just stood up to start pacing when there was a knock on the door. The Auror entered with a rather confused and ragged looking Sirius.

Both Harry and Remus rushed forward and tried to hug the filthy wretch of a man standing in the door way. Dumbledore invited Sirius in and explained everything to him, he told how Harry had discovered Pettigrew and had worked all the rest of it out with the help of his wife.

“Just hang on a minute; did you just say that Harry, my godson Harry has a wife?” Sirius finally croaked out his first words.

“Yes well I’ll leave that for Harry to tell you all about,” Dumbledore said as Fudge handed Sirius the letter of apology and told him he was to contact the ministry at his earliest convenience to collect his compensation. Fudge then stormed out with his two Aurors and Pettigrew in tow.

He did not get far, at the bottom of the stair Hermione Potter waited with a large group of reporters. Harry stayed behind while Sirius Remus and the others left the room and made their way down to the

corridor. Harry asked the headmaster if he could invite both Remus and Sirius to his quarters for the rest of the day. Dumbledore agreed and thanked Harry for seeing justice done.

Harry joined Sirius as Fudge tried to barge his way past the reporters, taking the letter from Sirius Harry waved it in front of the reporters, "I have here a letter apologising for the illegal imprisonment of my godfather by the ministry," he showed the letter to several of the reporters before he retrieved it and handed it back to Sirius, who was only too pleased to have his photograph taken as he waved the parchment for all to see.

Harry and Remus joined Hermione as they waited for Sirius to be done with the reporters, Fudge no doubt would be in all the papers in the morning shown as the villain in the story of injustice in the ministry. Harry was enjoying watching the man squirm almost as much as Dumbledore was.

Sirius joined them after a few minutes, the reporters all followed Fudge as he made his escape from the building.

"Hermione love we will be having guests for lunch and possibly dinner, is that ok?" Harry asked.

Having been introduced to Hermione both Remus and a rather filthy and smelly Sirius accepted their invite to stay. Sirius wanted to have his first real shower, bath, and wash all at once because as he said, "They don't have such facilities in Azkaban."

They all walked off to the Gryffindor tower and the Potters quarters. Sirius could not get over the fact that he now not only had a godson but a goddaughter in law as he called Hermione.

Chapter seven.

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Quidditch and Shopping.

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November the first had arrived and Harry had a slight problem to solve, he was not on the Gryffindor Quidditch team. How he had forgotten such an important part of his other life he did not know, all he was sure about was his befriending Neville Longbottom instead of Ron Weasley had brought him a few more problems than he had anticipated.

He was sat in the stands of the Gryffindor's, looking at the Quidditch pitch, remembering and reliving old memories of days long ago. It had been many years since he had played the game but quidditch was something that got into the blood, once you had played it you never forgot the thrill of winning or of catching the snitch. He eventually had an idea of how he could get himself on to the team, but it would need the help of both Neville and Hermione.

Harry found them both studying in the library; Neville had a book on the plant life of the Scottish mountains opened on his lap. Hermione had at least six different books and her own note book open, all spread out across the largest table in the library. Harry told them of his scheme to get a place on the quidditch team and to his delight they both volunteered to help him, without asking any questions at all.

The next morning Harry and Hermione stood out on the lawns in front of the castle, the weather was cold and Hermione was well wrapped up. Harry had put on the warmest set of clothes he possessed that would allow him plenty of freedom to move about on a broom. Having borrowed a school broom without permission Harry knew he was risking getting a detention but if his plot worked he would once again play in the first match of the season.

Neville had cornered Seamus Finnegan in the common room as he stood right behind Oliver Wood, the Gryffindor quidditch captain. "I'm

telling you Seamus, you should have seen Harry Potter on a broom, he was fantastic. He's out on the lawns still. He can catch a snitch faster than I can blink." Neville said not too quietly but still trying not to make it obvious he wanted Wood to overhear. "I'd bet anyone a Galleon Harry is faster than Charlie Weasley was."

Wood rose from his chair and left the common room, Neville rushed to the window nearest the door and pulled off his scarf, then with several students looking at him as though he were mad he pulled open the window and held out his scarf and began to wave it frantically.

From where she was standing Hermione could see Neville's scarf being waved, "Looks like Wood took the bait already," she called to Harry who was hovering a few feet away.

Five minutes later Ron Weasley came wandering across the grass, he looked lost in thought as he approached Hermione.

'Now that's a lucky break' Hermione thought, Weasley would be able to throw the ball much better than she could, "Hey there Weasley, fancy joining in," Hermione asked him.

"Huh, What, Join in what?" Ron asked as he jumped out of his thoughts.

"Well I've been throwing this ball for Harry to catch, bet you can't beat him," she said as she tossed the little silver ball from one hand to the other.

"That's about the size of a snitch," Ron said as he caught it mid toss.

Just then Harry saw Wood standing just inside the castle entrance, he obviously did not want Harry to know he was there. Harry grinned 'you have to move much quicker than that to hide from me Mr Wood' he thought.

"Hey there Potter, think you can catch," Ron shouted up to him, "here catch this one," he called as he threw the little ball as hard as he could.

The ball hurtled toward the castle, before Harry had had time to think he had turned around and was urging the broom forward crouching as low as he could, and getting every bit of speed he was capable of out of the old school broom he chased after his quarry, the little silver ball was speeding toward the glass face of the huge clock that adorned the main wall. Wood had to change his position as he watched Harry hurtle toward the wall.

The ball was about a meter or so away from the clock when Harry caught it, Hermione was certain that Harry was now going to plough into the clock face, but Harry pulled hard on the broom and tucking his feet up out of the way he went vertical with only inches to spare, he flew vertical up the face of the castle. At the top a quick turn and Harry was heading back toward the ground, the ball clutched in his hand.

Ron Weasley was amazed “Wow Potter, you could play seeker for Chudley cannons with that amount of skill,” he announced as Harry handed him the ball.

Wood had disappeared when Harry looked over toward the castle door, ‘He should be half way to McGonagall’s office by now’ he thought as he mounted the broom once again. Ron threw the ball several more times for Harry, always throwing it in a different direction and not worrying if it headed for open space or a window. Harry caught it each time, he was just returning the ball to Ron once again when McGonagall came striding toward them.

Harry dismounted the broom and stood next to Hermione. “Mr Potter follow me please,” McGonagall said in a brisk tone. She then marched off toward the castle; Hermione with her hands behind her back crossed her fingers. Harry was either about to be placed on the quidditch team or he was about to get himself several detentions for taking a school broom and flying without supervision.

Once in McGonagall’s office Harry began to think his plan had failed, the professor had been lecturing him for quite a while about getting proper permission and supervision, to use school property. “Now Mr Potter, I hope you won’t be taking school items for your own personal

pleasure in the future, Oh yes one more thing, would you mind just asking Mr Wood in please.”

Harry opened the office door and called Wood in, “So Wood it seems you were correct, Mr Potter would make a good and hopefully useful addition to the team, his skill with a broom may well prove helpful in securing us the house cup this year,” McGonagall said as Wood entered.

“Mr Potter I’m sure you have heard of quidditch, well the Gryffindor team needs a new seeker, can I assume you would accept the position,” she added looking Harry in the eye.

Harry remembered that the last time he had been chosen as seeker he had had no idea what quidditch was, he thought it a good idea to re-enact his previous appointment. “Quidditch professor? Is it like gobstones?” he asked working hard not to smile.

“I’m quite sure Mr Wood will be happy to tell you all about it,” the professor said with an exasperated look before she dismissed them both. She had forgotten about how Harry had grown up, until he had left the office.

Oliver Wood spent some time telling Harry about quidditch, its rules and the items used to play the game, once Wood had finished his obviously enthusiastic lecture on the best wizard sport in the entire world he let Harry go about the rest of his Sunday.

Harry found Hermione talking to Ron Weasley in the main entrance, a rather strong feeling of jealousy ran through him as he approached them. “Thanks for helping out Weasley,” he managed to say with what he hoped was a normal voice.

“Yeah, Hermione here was just telling me you might be put on the team, you do know there hasn’t been a first year on a house team for over a century, well at least you have some talent, maybe Gryffindor will get to win a game this year.” Ron answered.

“Yeah well I hope I’m good enough,” Harry said trying to think of a way to get Hermione away from Ron without being to obvious about it.

Then the thought that if he was someone looking in on his own thoughts it would probably seem like he did not trust his wife but he knew he would trust her with his life, he called himself a few choice names before he settled in to a conversation Hermione and Ron were having about how dangerous quidditch could be. Half way through this particular conversation Harry really wanted to get Hermione away from the redheaded thick twit who was happily telling her about some of the gruesome accidents that had befallen past seekers, some of his more explicit descriptions made even Harry's stomach squirm a little. Having listened to more than enough descriptions of the condition of some of the seekers who had fallen from their brooms from ridiculous heights Harry caught hold of Hermione's hand and pulling her gently away he told Ron he needed to talk to her about some family matter. Then he dragged her the opposite way to the direction Ron seemed to be heading in.

"Thank the stars for having a husband," Hermione said as soon as they were out of hearing distance of their fellow Gryffindor, "I thought that boy was going to bore me to death, going on and on about quidditch."

Harry gave a chuckle "Yes well I was getting a little jealous of him having all your undivided attention, that and you looked like you were going to fall asleep on us."

"I honestly don't know what it is that Lavender Brown likes about him, he eats like a pig, he has no manners at all, and he is so boring, he only has one topic of conversation and that's got something to do with Bubbly Cans or some such name. Who wants a boyfriend like that?" Hermione said making Harry roar with laughter.

Hermione wanted to know what he was laughing at, struggling to stop laughing, he answered "My self sweetheart, I was laughing at myself for getting jealous."

"Harry Potter, I don't believe you, why ever would you be jealous of him," Hermione exclaimed.

"I was jealous because I thought he had your full attention, Bubbly cans, that's priceless that one, I just have to tell the twins," Harry said when he stopped his second bout of laughter long enough to talk.

"So did you get on the team with your crafty little scheme, or did you end up with a detention?" she asked as they turned back toward the castle depths and its offer of warmth.

"I got a long lecture on taking school property without going through the correct channels, then I got another lecture, one on quidditch from Wood, when he told me all about being seeker for the Gryffindor team," Harry said as he suddenly lifted her and swung her around. "I am now the official Gryffindor seeker, youngest in a century."

Neville was waiting for them in the common room when they arrived, he had somehow saved them two chairs in front of the fire, Hermione gratefully sat down and held her hands up to the fire, it had been really cold outside, and standing around watching Harry had not helped, she realised she was freezing, and she began to worry about how cold Harry must have been flying around on a broom. She made her mind up to go and speak to McGonagall after lunch.

While Harry and Neville talked about their plot and quidditch along with other boy things, Hermione sat back and was soon asleep, Harry woke her about an hour later,

"You ok sweetheart," he asked a little concerned.

Hermione was standing in the stands, watching Harry chase the snitch, he was soaring higher and higher into the cold grey sky when suddenly the sky turned black and Harry was surrounded by evil cloaked monsters, they knocked him from his broom and he was falling, hurtling toward the ground with nothing to stop his fall, it was then she had screamed out and made both Harry and Neville jump.

"You ok sweetheart," Harry was asking when she saw who it was holding her, she flung her arms around him and dragged him into a fierce hug, and began to cry, "Oh Harry you were falling, those awful creatures knocked you off your broom, I thought you were going to die," she said repeatedly kissing his cheek.

“That’s that bloody thick Weasley, filling your head with all those gory stories the long legged prat,” Harry said staring at Ron who had been playing chess but was now watching Harry.

Harry sat back in his chair as he pulled Hermione onto his lap, “You shouldn’t listen to Weasleys mad tales, they’re giving you daymares and we haven’t even had lunch yet,” he said trying to lighten the mood.

Hermione gave him a playful slap on the arm “You can’t go calling them daymares now can you?” she asked her smile returning.

Neville chuckled a little “You haven’t met my Gran yet, now there’s a real day or nightmare,” he said grimacing.

Down in the great hall the three friends tucked into a huge lunch, Harry watched Ron as he ploughed food into his mouth, ‘Hermione’s right, he hardly stops to chew’ he thought as the red haired Gryffindor filled his plate for a third time.

As soon as they had finished lunch Hermione stood up “I’ll see you up in the common room shortly, there’s something I have to see McGonagall about,” she said as she gave him a quick kiss then rushed off in pursuit of the professor who had just left the great hall. While Harry and Neville took their time in the great hall, Hermione caught up with McGonagall, “Can I have a word please professor,” she asked panting slightly.

“Yes Mrs Potter what can I do for you?” the professor asked a smile on her face, she liked Hermione more than she had ever liked any of her other students, there was something about Hermione that reminded the old teacher of herself many years ago.

“It’s about Harry’s clothes, I’m sure you will have noticed that none of them actually fit him, and he does not have a winter coat, those evil Dursleys have never spent a penny on him,” Hermione said not pausing for breath. “I would like your permission to visit London tomorrow; I need to get some proper clothes for him before the bad weather really sets in, or he is liable to get ill.”

"Pray tell me Mrs Potter, what exactly were you going to do in London, I know you now have the responsibilities of a wife, but you are still only twelve years old?" McGonagall asked a very slight frown showing. 'Worst kind of Muggles those Dursleys' she thought.

"Well I thought that I could see if my mother could take some time off, and help me with the shopping," Hermione said feeling she had somehow lost this chance at helping Harry.

"And you have written to your mother and told her about your situation?" the old teacher said her smile returning.

"Er, I, Well no not yet, I mean I'm only just getting used to it myself," Hermione stuttered.

"I thought that might be the case, as it happens I have a free afternoon tomorrow and as you only have a double charms lesson in the morning, perhaps the three of us could go into one of the nearest Muggle towns and do a little shopping. I'm sure the headmaster wont object," McGonagall offered in a friendly voice.

Hermione spent several minutes of the professor's time as she thanked her rather profusely. As soon as the professor had gone Hermione went in search of her husband to tell him the good news. Hermione found them both in the library at their usual table, and she told Harry enthusiastically about her arrangement with her favourite teacher.

Harry frowned, "Hermione love, I have seven pence in Muggle money, and I only have that because I found it, I've never had so much as a penny off the Dursleys, I wont be able to buy much with seven pence now will I, I doubt it would be enough even to buy a chocolate bar," Harry said a little sadly, it would be nice to have some clothes that actually fit him.

"I've already thought of that Harry, I have ten Galleons saved from my birthday and if we go to Gringotts and exchange them we should get about fifty pounds, that should be enough to get you a warm coat, and a decent pair of trousers or jeans," Hermione said smiling.

"But isn't Gringotts in London? I'm sure McGonagall won't want to travel all the way there and back just to get me some clothes," Harry said.

"There must be a branch in Hogsmeade, we can go there before we go shopping," Hermione told him, her excitement at getting Harry new clothes building up.

"Well if there is a branch in Hogsmeade (which now she had mentioned it he recalled vividly) I have my own Vault and I could get enough money to buy a complete wardrobe, including some shoes, these ones leak," Harry said looking at his battered trainers, then he grinned mirroring Hermione's enthusiasm.

'How on earth could I have forgotten about Gringotts?' he asked himself as he watched Hermione's face light up with happiness.

Hermione spent quite sometime that evening measuring Harry, she measured him more than he had ever been measured before. The two Potters went to bed early that night and both were in a happy mood. As their charms lesson ended Harry grabbed Hermione's hand and began pulling her along, it took them just a few minutes before they were standing in front of a painting of fruit, Harry tickled the pear and opened the door to the kitchens, they were both welcomed by a group of house elves, Hermione knew nothing about them yet and Harry decided not to say anything, he could face her S.P.E.W period at a later date he told himself.

"Could we get some sandwiches to take with us, we are off on a shopping trip with professor McGonagall," Harry asked the nearest elf.

Just a minute later both Harry and Hermione left the kitchens with a large packed lunch each. Having called into the tiny branch of Gringotts that served the local needs Harry had withdrawn five hundred pounds, the three shoppers then caught the knight bus. Their shopping trip took them to a town called Aberdeen Harry had to act as he would have done in his first life where he had never been shopping, or had ever had the chance to buy any new things like clothes. He remembered being a lot like Mr Weasley at the time.

Hermione was really surprised by Harry's apparent fascination with the stores, for some one who had grown up with Muggles, he knew very little about the world he had grown up in. he had no idea about most of the things she pointed out to him, he had never even seen an escalator until that afternoon.

Professor McGonagall mentioned some thing about the lack of knowledge he seemed to have about the world he had lived in for ten years, when he told them that if you live most of the ten years locked in a cupboard under the stairs you don't get to go out too much.

McGonagall stared at him in shock, she knew he had been beaten, Poppy had told her about that, but nobody had known about him being locked in a cupboard.

"I thought you knew about that, that's where my school letter was addressed, 'Mr Harry Potter, the cupboard under the stairs, number four Privet Drive.'" Harry said as he saw the surprise on his teachers face.

"No the letters are all addressed magically," she replied, she had a few words to say to Dumbledore when she got back to school.

Saturday afternoon Harry took part in what may well have been one of the shortest games of Quidditch in the games entire history. Harry watched as Wood shook hands with the Slytherin captain, Madam Hooch set the balls free then she blew her whistle, Harry shot into the air along with his team mates, he had only managed to make half a circuit of the pitch when something hit him on the side of his head and got tangled in his hair, thinking it a huge bug flapping above his left ear he made to swat it away only to find that it was the snitch, he was diving for the ground his hand in the air waving the snitch about and yelling to Wood before anyone knew what had happened.

Students and teachers alike stared in disbelief as Harry stood in the centre of the pitch with the snitch held high, it seemed the only one who had actually seen him catch it was Hermione, who had not taken her eyes off him since he left the ground. She was still remembering her awful dream of him falling.

The cheer that suddenly rose to accompany Hermione's squeals of delight as she jumped up and down clapping was deafening, the entire school apart from the Slytherins were on their feet yelling and cheering for Harry.

Angelina Johnson landed next to Harry, she was the first of the team to have seen him with the snitch, she grabbed him in a huge bear like hug, and yelled over the noise of the crowd, her own congratulations to him. She was quickly followed by the rest of the team who hoisted Harry up on to their shoulders and walked a circuit of the pitch with him. Gryffindor had won one hundred and fifty to nothing in the shortest game anyone could remember, the game that would make Harry even more famous than he was already.

## Chapter Eight

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Ginny the Grangers and revelations.

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As November made its rather cold journey toward December, on the Thursday of the second week into what had been a very cold month so far, Harry was eating lunch with Hermione and Neville when something Harry heard said, reminded him of Ginny Weasley. He knew she would be sitting at home in the Burrow feeling desperately lonely, and bored, she would be looking forward to starting Hogwarts. Harry remembered just how hard it had been on the poor girl being the youngest of seven, and being the only girl. None of her brothers were really interested in her or her company; Ron would shun her every time she tried to join in a conversation saying things like 'Ginny push off'.

Harry still vividly remembered how it felt to be lonely with no friends, after all those years alone the sad memories were still with him, and Ginny was about to face the worst thing that could happen to a first year girl. She would start Hogwarts only to find herself possessed by Voldemort; she had been seriously traumatised by his warped mind the last time. Nobody ever knew just what he did to her or how much she had to suffer at the hands of the evil sixteen year old Tom Riddle. Harry was trying to think of a way to save her having to go through it all this time, she had after all been his one and only girlfriend in his other life, he thought she deserved better than to start her school life as a victim of Voldemort.

Hermione found him deep in thought as she spoke to him, and he did not reply. "Harry, hello anybody home?" she asked prodding him in the ribs gently.

"Oh sorry love I was thinking of Ginny Weasley," Harry said without thinking.

“And just who might Ginny Weasley be?” Hermione demanded to know.

Recovering his thoughts quickly Harry answered Hermione’s question, “Oh you won’t know her, I don’t even know her myself. All I know is she is Ron and the twins sister. She is apparently the youngest of seven, and she has six brothers who it appears don’t let her join in with anything they do, and they rarely talk to her beyond saying hello. I know they live somewhere remote, I was remembering what it was like to be that lonely what it was like before I had you and Neville, it must be ten times worse for a girl who gets ignored all the time don’t you think?” he told her.

“Gosh Harry, that must be awful, I mean I was lonely but I was never actually ignored, and wizarding families don’t send their children to school before Hogwarts do they, she wont have anyone to play with or anything, so she must be desperately lonely. I think we should write to her ask her if she would like a couple of pen pals, what do you think?” Hermione said horrified at how it might be with six brothers all older, and who wanted nothing to do with you.

“I think that my dear sweet wife, is so kind and thoughtful. You really are a brilliant witch, I think we should write to her today, I can get Hedwig to take the letters and wait for any reply. You will of course have to help me a little as I have no idea what a ten or eleven year old girl would like to hear about.” Harry answered; pen pals at school should at least give Ginny someone to talk too.

That evening as soon as they had finished their last class, Harry and Hermione sat in their quarters at the dining room table, and having decided to write to Ginny they both set about composing their letters; Harry made a good start with his but soon became stuck as to what he should write so he made it like a short introduction.

‘Dear Miss Weasley,

My name is Harry, Harry Potter. I am a first year at Hogwarts, and I am on the house quidditch team with your twin brothers. I don’t want you to think I am nosey or anything but I heard your brothers mention you, and when I mentioned you to my wife Hermione, and no I am not

mad, I am a first year, and I do have a wife, anyway she suggested we write too you, and ask if you would like a pen pal. I think this is a brilliant idea, so I would like to know if you would have me as a pen or should that be quill pal?

I have asked my owl Hedwig to wait for your reply; I hope you will write back. I am looking forward to becoming your friend.

Harry James Potter. First year, Gryffindor house, Hogwarts.

Harry read back his short letter, and quite satisfied that it would do as a start he held it out to Hermione for her to read. Hermione mentioned how short his letter was, but Harry pointed out that she had already written enough for the two of them and was not finished yet, so Miss Weasley would be bound to know everything about them she needed too.

Hermione had indeed written a fairly long letter telling Ginny about her marriage to Harry, she had also written quite a good description of life at Hogwarts for a first year, along with several little things that a girl might be interested in.

Hedwig left with the two envelopes with the instructions to give the letters only to Ginny, no one else was to read them. It was not that there was anything secret in them; Harry just did not want Voldemort finding out he was trying to befriend Ginny and making her a target.

Hedwig did not return until the following morning, with her she brought two letters, Harry opened his and read it through,

“Dear Harry.

Thank you for your letter, I was quite surprised when that beautiful owl landed on my bedroom window sill. I would be really happy to have you and your wife as my friends, she sounds so nice in her letter. I don’t have any friends here, there is only me and my mum most of the time so it can be a little lonely. I loved your owl, I don’t think I ever saw a white one before, and I do like the name you have given it, though I don’t know from the name if the owl is male or female, I have no doubt you will tell me in your next letter. Oh I never

heard of having a quill pal before so I am guessing that your wife Hermione is at least half Muggle, my dad will go crazy and will probably ask all sorts of odd questions when he meets you both because he absolutely loves Muggle's.

Thank you for being kind enough to think of me as being worth writing too, my brothers, I have six of them and being at Hogwarts you must know four of them, anyway they never write much so it is so nice to have someone to talk too. I am getting all teary eyed now, so I will say bye for now, and look forward to your next letter.

Ginevra (Please don't call me that) Weasley, your new friend Ginny.

The Burrow.

Ottery St Catchpole.

Harry finished reading the letter and sat back in his chair feeling good, he and Hermione had made a start in changing Ginny's life hopefully for the better, he knew they would soon be very good friends with Ginny.

Harry suddenly found he wasn't feeling so happy, it took him a minute before he realised it wasn't him but Hermione who wasn't very happy, in fact he knew that Hermione was in the bedroom crying, he tried to sort through the emotions he was getting from her, to sort through the thoughts entering his head, and find what it was that had suddenly made her cry, then he felt it, fear, Hermione was frightened of something, Harry rushed into the bedroom to find Hermione crying into her pillow.

Putting his arms around her Harry pulled her into a tight hug and asked what she was crying for, Hermione sniffling in between sobs held onto Harry as though he would disappear if she ever let him go, her thoughts entering Harry's head were a confusion of mixed happy thoughts of him and thoughts of dread about her mother and father. Harry just could not sort them out and he realised it was because some of her thoughts were coming from the private areas of her mind, disjointed as they escaped little by little into the area of her mind that she shared with him. They were thoughts she had not wanted to

share with him but now as she cried she was having trouble keeping them from him.

'Hermione you are going to have to tell me what is troubling you, or you might just drive me mad' Harry thought as he held her tight and kissed her cheek.

'Harry I don't want them to take you away from me, we have been together every day and night for nearly three months now and I don't ever want to live without you again, I'm yours forever now' came her reply.

'Nobody is going to take me away, why would you think someone would take me away from you, I won't let anyone do that, you are my wife now and forever, and I am yours for all time' Harry was still confused but he suddenly realised they were not actually talking.

'Harry my mum and dad don't know about us yet, I haven't dared to tell them, they might not let me come back to school, they might take me away from all this. I'm scared of losing you, I think this, the way I feel, is what real love is Harry, I only ever want to be with you for always, I want us to be a family and to grow old together, if they take me away from you I think I would die. I know I am only twelve, but I think I am in love with you, and always will be'.

'Hermione Jane Potter, that's your name now, and you are my wife forever, and whether your parents like it or not you are now my responsibility not theirs, it is my duty as a husband to protect you, and to provide for you, and to love you, so don't you ever again think that anyone is going to take you from me, there isn't any thing powerful enough in this world to separate us' Harry thought angrily.

'I know for sure that I am truly in love with you Hermione, I love you more than you could possibly know, and I always will, I will never let you go do you hear me, never!'

Harry knew something had happened, something that had changed in their bonding something that had somehow moved them toward finalised the bonding, completed it. Then he knew just as if someone had told him, it was their open admission that they belonged to each

other, that had been the step in their bonding they had taken, they had accepted the marriage and they had lived together but today was the first time they had said 'I'm yours' to each other.

'I'll go and talk to your parents in the morning, they should know, I'll explain it all, they will just have to accept that you are mine now and I am yours and there is nothing they or anyone else can do about it' Harry told Hermione as she stopped crying.

'You really love me Harry, you said you know you really love me, I love you too, I know that now, I honestly and truly love you with everything in me' Hermione said as she looked up into his eyes.

Harry kissed her, a gentle long loving kiss and stroked her cheek where the tears had run, 'Yes Mrs Potter I really love you, more than life. Now are you going to tell me what started all this?' he asked.

Ginny had written in her letter about how unhappy her mother would be if she suddenly found her daughter married at only eleven years old. It had brought to the surface the fears Hermione had been suppressing since she left Dumbledore's office on the day of the sorting. Fears that her parents would never accept their only daughter being married to a stranger and would take her away from this new and amazing world she had found herself a part of.

Harry insisted that they both skip their lessons for the day, when professor McGonagall came to see why they had not been out of their rooms all morning Harry explained all about how Hermione had been earlier, so the professor had written them a note excusing them of all classes for the day and promised that she would accompany them in the morning.

Saturday morning, dressed in the new clothes Hermione had bought him, Harry waited in the entrance hall of Hogwarts with Hermione, they were waiting for professor McGonagall who was going to be accompanying them to the Granger house, and hopefully prevent Harry from doing anything he might regret later.

Both Harry and Hermione were nervous as the Granger front door opened and Hermione's mum welcomed them in, there was a frown

on her face and she asked if Hermione had done something wrong. Professor McGonagall assured her that Hermione was the top pupil in her year along with Harry and had done nothing wrong at all.

Hermione suddenly flung herself into her mother's arms and started to cry; Mrs Granger worried about her little girl held her tight and murmured quietly that nothing could be that bad as she rocked Hermione gently. Hermione eventually pulled herself together "I love you so much mum," she said as she stepped back from her mother and took hold of Harry's hand.

Mrs Granger raised an eyebrow when she saw her daughter take this young boys hand and look up at him with what she cold only think of as love, she was so surprised by a thought she suddenly had that she raised her eyebrows even further so that they disappeared under her hair.

"I think we should all go into the sitting room, I have a feeling that there is something to talk about here," Mrs Granger said as she walked to a door.

Mr Granger was in the sitting room, he rose from his chair when they entered, after shaking the professors hand he held his open arms out to Hermione who hesitantly let go of Harry and then threw her arms around her dads neck and hugged him furiously for some seconds, Mr Granger eventually held Hermione by her shoulders and gently pushed her away from him until he could look into her eyes.

"Ok, what's wrong with my little bookworm," he asked her gently.

Hermione turned and looked at Harry. Mr Granger was a rather tall and muscular man, still in his thirties, he made a very intimidating figure when he stood to his full height, which he did when he saw the look Hermione gave to Harry.

Harry took a very deep breath "Mr and Mrs Granger, I have something to tell you about your daughter and I, might I suggest that we all sit down first, mainly because my legs are shaking," He said hoping to lighten the atmosphere in the room.

Having all taken seats, Hermione sat squashed in beside Harry on a comfortable chair, which did not go unnoticed by the two parents. Harry had no idea how to start, how to tell two unsuspecting Muggles that the daughter they had sent off to school just three months ago was now his wife escaped him.

Mr Granger looked at Harry “You said you have something to tell us?”

Harry took another deep breath “Hermione and I are married,” he said without trying to soften the blow.

Mr Granger burst out laughing “Oh yes, very good, married my little bookworm.”

Mrs Granger however was watching her daughter and she knew that this young boy was telling no joke “How, When, is it possible, two in the same family?” she asked.

The three magical people all gasped, this was anything but what they had expected, they had all expected tears shouting and maybe even threats, but for the two Muggles to take it like this had them totally confused.

Mrs Granger got up and crossed to Hermione, “Well don’t you think you should introduce us to your husband then sweetheart.”

Both Hermione and Harry stared at Mrs Granger as though she was an alien or something; it was professor McGonagall who managed to talk.

“Y-You and Mr Granger?” she asked

“Yes we were both thirteen the day it happened, we were playing a child’s game, kiss chase we called it, I let Richard catch me and when he kissed me it rattled the windows in all the houses and shook the air all around us, everyone called it a small earth quake but we both knew, we were meant for each other, made in heaven we call it” Mrs Granger said a distant look in her eyes as she remembered, “it was torture for the first few years every time we were apart, we married as soon as we were allowed to by the law.

Mr Granger grabbed Hermione lifted her up and spun around with her, laughing all the time. “I’ve been so worried about my little princess, always alone, no one but her books, now I know she will live happy ever after, just like us,” he said as he gave Mrs Granger a small kiss.

Harry was still sat with his mouth wide open, unable to take it all in, just a few short minutes ago he had felt his stomach was about ready to throw out his breakfast in protest at the situation, now he was not so sure what was going on. Mrs Granger gave him a hug “You best take good care of our little girl, her dad thinks the world of her you know, and so do I.”

When Mr Granger finally put a very shocked Hermione down he looked at the puzzled face of Harry, “I suppose you expected me to throw you out or something?”

Harry nodded, not quite sure what to say, Mr Granger held out his rather huge hand to Harry and said “Welcome to the family, er, Hermione why don’t I know the name of my little girls husband, my son in law?”

Hermione was just coming out of her shock “S,s,sorry dad this is Harry, Harry James Potter, Harry this is my dad.”

Harry shook his head and said “Hello sir,”

Once the initial excitement had died down a little, Hermione told her mum and dad what had happened when she had gone to give Harry a quick congratulatory peck on his lips, Mr Granger roared with laughter at the thought of them standing there with their lips stuck together. Mrs Granger wasn’t at all surprised when she was told that if she had lived in their world she would have become legally married from the minute that the magic of a fated couples first kiss had shook those windows.

A few minutes later Mrs Granger took Hermione into the kitchen to help her with making some sandwiches and tea, “So are you going to tell me about Harry?” she asked quietly.

“Harry is a wonderful caring and loving person mum, even after all he has been through, I realised only yesterday that what I feel for him is love, the real thing, not that girly crush thing people my age usually get,” Hermione went on to tell her mum how Harry had been treated by his Aunt and Uncle. Hermione was just placing the sandwiches on a plate when she almost jumped out of her skin.

‘Hermione love, I think your dad is brilliant, ask your mum not to tell him about the Dursleys, I would hate for him to get into trouble for me’ she heard Harry say, she looked around and was surprised he wasn’t standing right behind her.

‘You never noticed, yesterday when we had that talk, you never noticed. We never actually said a word out loud to each other, we had the entire conversation like this’ Harry told her as she grasped what was happening.

Amazed that she had missed something so magical that she could hardly believe it Hermione placed the food tray she carried on to the coffee table, ‘Harry, I love you’ she thought wanting to try out this new found way of communicating with him.

‘I love you too, with all my heart and soul’ Harry answered.

## One Hundred and Forty going on Twelve

### Journey to the Burrow

In the weeks leading up to Christmas both Harry and Hermione wrote a letter at least three times a week to Ginny, each on alternate days. This way Ginny got at least one short letter a day. Ginny really loved to read Hermione's letters because they were long and so full of description, the quidditch matches were written like a commentary and Ginny had visions of Hermione scribbling frantically while trying to keep her eye on Harry as he hurtled after the snitch. She also enjoyed Harry's letters though they were always short, seldom had any gossip in them and were really short stories about Hermione or a boy called Neville, who Harry had told her was his best friend, Neville sounded like a nice boy.

Harry was surprised when the week before Christmas he and Hermione received a letter from Mrs Weasley, thanking him and Hermione for bringing her daughter out of a bad bout of misery caused no doubt by loneliness. The letter was one inviting them to visit the Burrow during the holiday to actually meet Ginny in person. Hermione pleaded with Harry to accept the invite and to write back to Mrs Weasley asking what day they could visit, she was really happy when the return letter asked if they would like to stay at the Burrow for a couple of days during the holiday.

Arrangements were made to meet the Weasley family on the platform when they got off the Hogwarts express. Hermione found that not having to go skiing with her parents now that she was married gave her a strange feeling of independence of being grown up, though she was not sure why. She knew though that this Christmas she would not be alone in some strange hotel where there was never anyone to talk to. Where she would sit night after night alone reading a book, more or less forgotten by those around her, this year she had Harry and she would get to meet Ginny, who she already thought of as a friend.

Harry had been surprised by the letter from Mrs Weasley; he had been convinced when he had made the decision not to sit with Ron on that first day that he had forfeited any chance of spending time at

the Burrow, the place he had loved so much. It seemed to him that there were indeed some things in the past that just could not be changed, though he hoped that his fight with Voldemort would not be one of them, he hoped he could find a much quicker way of disposing of the evil wizard this time so avoiding the needless deaths of so many people.

Harry was reading his latest letter from Ginny, and he chuckled as he sat reading it, sometime in the last two days she had realised that she had been writing to 'The Harry Potter', he reread the lines that had made him chuckle.

'Dear Harry,

Thank you for your last letter, I am so pleased you won the quidditch match; I hope that I will be in Gryffindor with you.

Can I ask you a question, are you him? of course it doesn't matter if you're not but dad says you are, if you are I hope you are still going to be my friend...

She must have been a little nervous about asking, Harry thought, he remembered the crush she had had on him when they first met, he remembered how nervous he had made her, he would not do that this time, this time he would be starting out as her friend.

He began to write his reply...

Dear Gin,

I hope I can call you that, you asked if I am him, well I suppose I am, though I am nothing like the books or fairy tales say I am, I hope I haven't disappointed you because I have grown to like you a lot, and I was sort of hoping we could be friends for life. I know Hermione has come to think of you as her best friend although you have yet to meet in person.

I don't know if you will remember but we have already met, and I liked you even then, you were standing with your mum at Kings Cross when I asked for your mum's help getting on to the platform. I liked

you because you did not laugh at me, the little lost boy in my baggy scruffy clothes, and you had a nice smile that I can still remember.

I am really looking forward to talking to you in person, maybe you could show me around your place, from what I have learned it sounds like a wonderful place to live, your Mum seems nice too, inviting us two strangers to stay with you for a few days, I am sure I will like your dad as well.

Well that's all for now, write back soon.

Your friend Harry.

The end of term exams went well for both Harry and Hermione, both of them came out top of the class, though Harry did sometimes think he was somehow cheating, still he did not want to let Hermione down, and most of the stuff he had long since forgotten. So really he had worked hard.

The train ride to London was mainly uneventful apart from a very quick visit to their compartment by the twins, they had both become extremely good friends with Harry even though Harry was a year behind them. Harry had thought it a good idea to befriend both Fred and George, after all their other friend Lee Jordan never seemed to fall foul of one of their notorious pranks.

The twins entered the carriage and took a seat next to Harry, they had been talking about various things at the Burrow, like the pool where they went swimming in the summer, the field surrounded by trees that they used as their quidditch pitch.

Just after the twins had left Malfoy and his constant companions Crabbe and Goyle arrived, Malfoy obviously thought that now they were away from Hogwarts and their teachers he could take his revenge for the thump Potter had given him at the start of term.

“Ah Potter and his foul...” it was as far as he got, Harry glared at the three Slytherin’s and before they knew what was happening they were all lying on the carriage floor bound in tight ropes.

"Look Malfoy, I will tell you this just one time, if you ever do or say anything to my wife ever again, I will make sure you will never speak again, and if you ever hurt her in any way, I will send you to your ancestors, and don't think for one moment that I wont." Harry coldly whispered in Malfoy's ear.

Malfoy shuddered when he saw and felt the power in Harry's eyes, and he knew that the threat was a real one, he knew Harry would stop at nothing to protect his wife, the look in Harry's eye made him wet himself in fear as he lay bound on the floor. Harry levitated the three Slytherins out into the corridor, before sitting back down.

'Thank you Harry, it was nice of you to protect me, but I could have done it myself' Hermione told him.

'I know that sweetheart, but they don't, the longer it is before they find out, the safer we will be' Harry answered 'your abilities could well save our lives one day love'

'Harry would you really do that to Malfoy, you know what you said if he ever hurt me' Hermione asked.

'Hermione love I don't care who it is, if anyone ever hurts you, or tries to hurt you, I will make sure they live just long enough to regret it, even Voldemort himself' Harry replied.

The rest of their journey went uninterrupted until Neville arrived just as the train was slowing down, he had been playing chess against Ron and had lost all track of time, neither Harry nor Hermione were the least bit surprised by this, Neville was hopeless at remembering things. The three friends parted company on the platform after wishing each other a merry Christmas, Neville went of with his formidable looking gran while Harry and Hermione went in search of the Weasleys, it did not take them long to spot the sea of red hair just half way down the train.

Together they approached the Weasley family, Fred and George both called to them "Harry, Hermione, over here,"

Ginny spotted Harry a second later and she recognised him straight away, although he had grown quite a lot since she had seen him, she gave Hermione a hug then turned to Harry and held out her hand to him.

'Hermione, I am going to give Ginny a huge hug so don't you go getting your knickers in a twist, ok' Harry said as ignoring Ginny's hand he grabbed her in a warm friendly hug. Letting go of her he gave her a quick kiss on her cheek "Hi I'm Harry," he said needlessly "I've been looking forward to meeting you."

Ginny's face turned red but Harry ignored the change in colour and caught hold of Ginny's hand then with his other hand he took hold of Hermione, Harry led the girls hand in hand out of the platform and followed the rest of the Weasleys as they walked to the car park.

Hermione was still slightly put out with him holding Ginny's hand, till Harry explained that Ginny had been shaking like a leaf when he hugged her, so he had only held her hand to help her to calm down and to accept him for who he was and not think of him as 'The Harry Potter, the boy who lived. Hermione still thought that just maybe he should have taken a more gentle approach but she had to concede that his way of doing it had worked, by the time they were sat in the back of the car that would take them to the Burrow, Ginny was busy chatting away to them as though they had been friends for years.

As the car turned down the track that led from the road to the Burrow, Ginny turned to Hermione "I was almost sick with nerves about meeting the great hero, but Harry is just the same boy who wrote those letters."

Hermione smiled, "Yes Ginny, Harry is just Harry, I can't say he's not special because to me he is the most special boy in the world, but I know what you mean."

"I nearly died when he hugged me right in front of you, I thought you might hex me for a minute," Ginny giggled.

Hermione giggled as well "Yeah me too," she said then burst out laughing at the look on Ginny's face "I don't mean the hex bit, I meant

the look on your face when he hugged you, I thought you were going to run off."

The ice between the three of them was broken and the beginnings of a true friendship had started to develop.

Harry knew Ginny probably still had a crush on the boy who lived, but that was a different boy, that was a boy from fairy tales. The Harry she knew now was the crazy friend who liked to hug her hello in front of his wife, the Harry she had gotten to know through their many letters.

Two minutes later the car pulled up next to a rather rundown old garage or shed, Harry was never sure which it actually was. They all climbed out and Harry stood with his arm around Hermione as they took in the crooked yet quaint house that was the Burrow.

Hermione looked in awe at the house, she had never seen it before but Ginny's description had been fairly accurate. Harry looked at the house he had not seen for over a hundred years, it looked no different than he remembered it. He looked forward to one of Mrs Weasleys meals, she was the best cook he had ever known, it had been one of the things he missed most about the Burrow when he had stopped visiting so many long years ago.

Taking hold of their trunks Harry made his way to the door, following the Weasley clan as they all disappeared inside and gathered around the kitchen table. Harry watched Hermione as she stared around just as he had done on his very first visit, she watched as pans scrubbed them selves in the sink, she watched Mrs Weasleys knitting as it clicked away on a chair with no human hands to guide the needles. She was just as fascinated as he had been.

Mrs Weasley showed them to their rooms, Hermione was sharing with Ginny while he expected to be put in with Ron, instead Mrs Weasley led him to Percy's room, Harry was not sure which was the worst of the two evils, Percy and his pompous ways or Ron and his snoring. Leaving their trunks in their rooms they joined the Weasleys in the kitchen, Ginny offered to take them for a tour of the grounds,

"It's just beautiful in the winter when there is frost or snow, she told them as they walked around the house toward the woods.

## Unhappy at the Burrow

Almost half way through their stay at the Burrow Harry took a walk to the pool at the back of the house, he was feeling tired more tired than he had for a long time. He had not had much sleep since arriving at the Burrow, even Mrs Weasleys excellent cooking only helped him to sleep for about three hours; he would then lie awake in his bed thinking of Hermione.

He had become so accustomed to her being in his bed with him he felt desperately lonely without her. He knew that he was being just a little foolish she was after all just a floor below sleeping in Ginny's room but he could not rid himself of his need for her to be close so he could hold her in his arms.

He reached the pool just as it started to rain, standing under one of the trees he put up a shield against the rain, knowing full well that if any of the Weasleys found him they would assume that the tree was sheltering him. Drying a spot of ground Harry sat down to contemplate his first holiday as Hermione's husband.

He had not really spent much time with Hermione in the past two and a half days, he had watched as Hermione and Ginny became close, maybe even best friends, the fact was he had spent most of his time at the Burrow so far being alone amongst a crowd of red heads and he did not like how it felt, he had thought his days of loneliness were over.

Ginny was not the Ginny he had known before, this Ginny was much more childlike in some way, and he knew it was his memories of Ginny after she had been possessed by Voldemort that he remembered about her. Voldemort had been the one to change her, to rob her of her childhood, he had been the one that had made her do things she would never be able to forgive herself for. Harry decided he had to do something that would change all that, he wanted to see the Ginny he had seen just a few hours ago, grow up into the girl she was meant to be. Even though she seemed to be keeping his wife from him he liked this Ginny, and wanted to keep her as one of his best friends.

He began once again to think of Hermione and just how silly it was to be missing her when she was in the same house, and sometimes even in the same room. Still he could not shake the feeling of loneliness that was threatening to ruin their week. He just prayed for the week to pass by quickly, he wanted so much to hold his wife as he had done so many times in the past four months; he wanted to talk to her, to hear her say his name again.

He was cursing the nights when he was unable to sleep without her, he cursed the days for being to long while she spent nearly all her time with Ginny. He suddenly wished he had never accepted the invite; he should have gone with her to Grimmauld place, be with his godfather, he should be spending time with his wife not sitting under a tree feeling so sad.

A slight sniff behind him brought him out of his self pity as he felt Hermione's presence getting closer, Hermione sat down next to him on the ground and wrapped her arms around him and began to cry onto his shoulder.

"I'm sorry Harry, I didn't think I was hurting you, will you hold me tight?" she sniffled.

Harry just placed an arm around her waist and pulled her to him, but he remained silent. Hermione carried on crying, she had felt his sadness, then she had heard his last few thoughts as he thought about his loneliness about how little time she had spent with him, but the part that made her cry was when he had wished they had never come to the Burrow.

Finally he spoke to her.

"It's nothing love, I'm just being selfish because I am tired, I just can't sleep without you there beside me." He told her.

If Harry had said this to make her feel better it did not, instead it had the opposite effect, causing her to clamber onto his lap and cry a little harder into his collar. She had been sleeping ok as long as he hugged her and kissed her goodnight, but that might be because she was sharing a bed with Ginny. She was not sleeping with her Harry,

though she was sleeping she woke each morning feeling more tired than the day before, and she thought that maybe she shouldn't be feeling the way she did, she shouldn't be missing her husband's arms around her so desperately every morning.

"Hermione love stop all this crying, you have someone in bed with you, that's all it is, I have to sleep alone on a cot in Percy's room. That's why I feel it more, now how about you give me a kiss and make me feel better," he said as he looked into her eyes and wrapped both his arms around her.

Hermione gave him the longed for kiss and then snuggled in closer to him, they fell asleep there under the tree safe in each others arms, and all of Harry's loneliness deserted him as he slept. They were awoken just as it was getting dark by a worried looking Mrs Weasley, "There you are dears," she called as she neared them, waking them both with a start.

Shaking with cold they walked hand in hand to the Burrow kitchen where Ginny was busy doing some chores, Hermione offered to help but Mrs Weasley ushered her and Harry into the living room and told them to sit by the fire to warm up.

Once Mrs Weasley had gone back into the kitchen Hermione climbed into Harry's lap again, and there in the warmth of the roaring fire, snuggled comfortably in each others arms, together they fell asleep again. They were awakened for the second time that day by Mr Weasley gently calling their names.

Getting up and both feeling a little flustered at being found asleep again, they went into the kitchen and joined the rest of the Weasley family for supper, which was once again an excellent meal. Just after ten Mrs Weasley sent them all off to bed, Hermione to Ginny's room, and Harry to Percy's cold and unwelcoming room. Harry clambered into his cot and wished Hermione good night, she replied telling him she loved him and once again she was sorry for doing something to hurt him, Harry told her to get some sleep and to have sweet dreams of them being together.

Harry managed to sleep till just after one in the morning, he woke to feel the emptiness of his bed once again, tonight though he did not feel as bad about it as he had on the other nights, tonight he had had his wife tell him she loved him, he had held her and kissed her, and as he lay there thinking about it he thought maybe he had been a little silly.

About half an hour after he woke he heard Hermione 'Harry come downstairs to me, I'm alone in the living room'

Harry quietly climbed from the cot and careful not to make any noise he made his way to the living room, 'what are you doing down here sweetheart?' he asked as she hugged him tight.

'Mrs Weasley thought that I wasn't getting enough sleep being in the same bed as Ginny so she conjured a small cot for me, I woke up missing you dreadfully, so I came down here where we can be together' Hermione answered.

'It's a horrible feeling, I don't ever want to feel like that again Harry, I want to wake up by your side every morning of my life' she told him as they got comfortable on the sofa.

Harry waved his hand at the fire and watched as some logs placed themselves in the glowing ashes, moments later they had a roaring fire and lying in each others arms they fell asleep. Mrs Weasley was the one that once again found them asleep holding each other tight, she gave a little sigh as she covered them with an old crocheted throw. As she started making the breakfast a little quieter than she normally did Molly Weasley began to wonder, not for the first time, about her daughters new friends, she knew they were soul-mates and were husband and wife but that was about all she knew about soul-mates and their bond. Worried by their unusual sleeping and taking the decision that just for once breakfast could wait awhile, she quietly collected one of her books from her husband's collection in the living room and began to read.

She had only read half a page when she came across a very interesting part; she read it twice just to be sure she fully understood it.

'In the first few months of the bonding, soul-mates can and sometimes do experience extreme anxiety, sleeplessness, and some form of depression if they spend any amount of time without physical contact in some form. It is known that this requirement for contact is mainly negated by the soul-mate's sleeping habits; it is believed that their deep seated need to sleep together is the natural way for them to obtain the required contact. It is not yet known why this physical contact is required but some soul-mates totally deprived of it after their bonding have actually died for an as yet unknown reason.

Soul-mates who bond at a young age are more susceptible to these extremes, it is advised and encouraged and legally endorsed by the ministry for magic that the marriage by bonding be recognised as a full and legal magical contract, therefore parents of young bonded couples should beware of the dangers of separating their offspring due to an innate sense of morality.'

Mrs Weasley of course knew that their marriage was recognised as fully legal but she had not realised that by keeping them separated she could actually be causing them some harm, she was torn by her feeling that the children were to young to sleep together, and the feeling that she had no right to inflict unnecessary suffering on them, finding them sleeping in each others arms twice in the last twenty-four hours seemed to reflect the warnings in the book.

Arthur Weasley head of the Weasley household, and the man Harry had come to respect more than any other, entered the kitchen fully expecting his breakfast to be ready, instead he found a rather worried Molly staring at the book in front of her. Molly had just not been able to come to a conclusion as to whether she should allow the children to sleep together or to carry on as she was and have them sleep in different rooms, the whole thing was playing on her mind.

"Morning dear," Arthur managed to say before he was shushed by Molly, who pointed to the living room. Arthur tip toed over to the living room door and poked his head into the room; there fast asleep lying in each others arms were Ginny's new friends.

As Arthur returned to the table Molly placed the book in front of him and pointed to the part she had been reading before she stood and started on cooking him his breakfast.

“So that’s why they keep falling asleep together, we should sort out some different sleeping arrangements don’t you think,” he said as Molly placed a cup of tea in front of him.

“But they are so young to be sleeping together,” Molly argued feebly.

“Maybe so, but their parents know about it, and the school has provided them with special quarters. What makes us so different from everyone else?” Arthur said as he tucked into the food Molly had just placed in front of him.

“But Arthur...” Molly began but Arthur cut her off, “Molly dear you are a lovely person and a wonderful wife and mother, but you do have a nasty habit of putting your own feelings over and above everyone else, even when you know those feelings to be wrong. So if you can’t find a way to change things around I will give Sirius Black a call and get him to call and collect the children,” Arthur said a little annoyed, his wife had no reason to keep the two apart.

Arthur finished his food in silence, it was not often he stood up to his wife but this time it involved the happiness and well being of two lovely children, who without being asked had helped his little girl out of her loneliness. Grabbing his cloak from the hook by the door he spoke once more before leaving for work, “Call me at lunch time and let me know what you are going to do, Sirius will need a little time to prepare if he is to come and fetch them.”

## Happy at the Burrow

Molly Weasley had made her decision, she could not harm children no matter what the reason, and there was no way that she would let 'Arthur blooming Weasley' have the last word on any subject, and that included the sleeping arrangements of the two young visitors. She could not move Ron or Ginny from their own rooms, it would not be right, it just wouldn't be fair on either of her two youngest. So grabbing her wand she marched very purposely from the house, she was about to do something she had thought of doing on more than one occasion. "Right Arthur Weasley lets see how you like this when you get home," she said as she entered his work shed, she was going to enjoy this.

With a few waves of her wand she had shrunk all of Arthur's muggle collection and all of his other things every gadget and whatsit, and placed them in a corner at the back of the shed. A few more waves of her trusty wand and the inside of the shed slightly resembled Ginny's bedroom.

By the time she was conjuring a comfortable looking bed; Molly had lost her anger at Arthur and was actually enjoying herself.

It had been quite some time since she had performed any magic other than the usual cleaning and washing spells, so she set about the transformation of the little shed with eagerness. With a rather grand flourish of her wand she conjured a nice wall to wall carpet, with a deep pile and embossed all over with the Gryffindor lion. Pleased at how well things were turning out she thought about how cold it might get in the little shed at night, so she conjured tapestries to cover all the walls, and a little pot bellied stove to warm the place up. She even went as far as expanding the shed doubling its size, so she could add a few more touches. By the time she had finished she had been so carried away with her creation that it now looked like a place fit for a duke.

Molly stood at the door of the shed and looked at the now opulent interior and realised that she had really gone well over the top, but with a chuckle she left it as it was and returned to her kitchen to finish preparing breakfast for her sure to be hungry family. She left Harry

and Hermione to sleep until the appearance of Ron, yawning and rubbing his eyes but still ready and eager for his morning feast.

In the living room Molly gave Hermione a gentle shake “Breakfast dear,” she said as the bleary eyes of the bushy haired girl became focused.

“Thanks Mrs Weasley,” Hermione croaked as she shook Harry to wake him.

“I have a little surprise for you after breakfast; now what would you like pumpkin juice or tea with your meal.” Molly almost whispered as though not wanting to wake Harry.

“Could we both have tea please?” Hermione asked wondering why Mrs Weasley had such an odd, out of place grin on her face.

Harry felt absolutely great when he woke, none of his unhappiness from the day before was left, it was as though he had been a different person yesterday. Following Hermione through to the kitchen he took in a deep breath savouring the aromas that were drifting through the entire house.

Breakfast at the Burrow was a noisy affair; the entire family apart from the father sat happily around the kitchen table eating and talking, several different conversations were taking place all at the same time. Harry looked around the table and a huge smile crossed his face, this was how he remembered the Burrow, a place of happiness and joy, not the place of loneliness and sadness he had felt only yesterday.

Leaning over Hermione’s shoulder Mrs Weasley placed an old book between Hermione and Harry, “You should read this, it really is interesting, I doubt there is another copy left anywhere else in the world, it’s a sort of heirloom been passed down in the Prewett family for generations, I was reading a little of it yesterday,” she said as she opened the book to the page she had shown Arthur.

“It explains why you kept falling asleep,” she told Hermione who had given her a curious look.

Harry and Hermione read the page shown and they both instantly knew why they had been feeling the way they had, it was not because Hermione was spending too much time with Ginny, it was simply that since their arrival at the Burrow even though they had been in the same house, and most of the time in the same room, they had hardly had any physical contact, apart from a quick hug and kiss hello in the morning and then again at night when they said goodnight, when doing things together they had sat or stood with Ginny between them, whereas before they had constantly held each other, either holding hands or walking arm in arm, or wrapped in each others arms as they slept.

Hermione felt relieved as she read the page, she had been blaming herself for her husbands' unhappiness, an unhappiness that could be cured by simply holding hands whenever and where ever they could. Happy that she now had the answers to her problem, her appetite returned, she helped herself to some more bacon and ate as she read the old book.

Harry though feeling relieved was still a little angry at him self, he should have known about this, he should have spent sometime in his previous long life studying these sort of things; they were the sort of small details that a school headmaster should be aware of.

As Harry placed his knife and fork down on his now empty plate, and before he could open the top button on his jeans to let out his now slightly over full stomach, Mrs Weasley asked both him and Hermione to follow her. She lead them out to Arthur's old garden shed, the one Harry knew he kept his collection of muggle things in. Harry had always enjoyed Mr Weasleys fascination for all things Muggle. There was always some item that Arthur had charmed in some crazy way.

"Ok Harry, Hermione, I hope you wont mind if I move you out of the house and put you up in the shed," Molly said a huge grin on her face.

Molly almost burst out laughing at the look on Hermione's face, she could almost hear her thinking 'A shed, she's putting us in the shed'. Stifling a chuckle Molly opened the door and ushered them inside. She did begin to chuckle when she saw the look on the two faces of her guests, Hermione stood and stared at the room that she found

herself in, it looked brilliant she thought as she looked to see Harry's reaction. He looked as stunned as she had been.

"Whoa, Mrs Weasley, this is amazing," Harry whispered after giving a long low whistle.

"Absolutely brilliant," Hermione declared as she sat on the bed.

Moments later Ginny entered "Bloody hell!" she exclaimed as she looked around "swap you rooms Harry," she said as she jumped onto the bed along side Hermione.

"Hey mum, how about redoing my bedroom next?" Ginny asked laughing as both she and Hermione bounced on the soft bed.

Harry had a sudden realisation as Mrs Weasley tutted at the two girls bouncing on the bed; he stood and watched them for a minute. His Hermione though his wife, and a lovable bookworm and she was clever well beyond her years was still a child, under the pseudo adult exterior she was a little girl who still needed to play with children and friends of her own age. He wondered why he had never thought about it before, not even in his other life, he and Ron had always thought of her as the grown up one of the trio.

'Hermione sweetheart is it ok if I leave you here with Ginny, I want to have a talk to the twins?' he asked smiling as the girls rolled around on the bed tickling each other. He would think of something to talk to the twins about later, for now he would leave Hermione playing with Ginny.

Taking a stroll around the Burrow grounds Harry decided that in future he would join in with Hermione and Ginny in what ever they did, even if what they did was 'girly' as Ron termed it, now that he had thought about it he knew he had not spent much time thinking about how things were affecting his wife and he should have. It should have been one of his main concerns, after all what would be the sense in saving her from Ron if in doing so he robbed her of her childhood and changed the woman she would become, just as Voldemort had done to Ginny.

'Yes if I have to I will play their games, just as I should have done last time I was eleven years old, this time I will be an eleven year old boy' he thought.

Unexpectedly Harry quickly found out he actually enjoyed most of the things the girls were playing, they had to teach him most of rules for the games they played like, hide and go seek, or I spy, he even quite enjoyed helping out with a skipping rope, holding one end of the rope while one of the girls did the skipping. Hermione and Ginny both knew Harry had never had the chance to play properly before, and both girls made an effort to help him. Harry found during the remainder of the week that he had actually missed out on a lot of fun and laughs in his other life time and he wondered if it had been due to Ron's anti girl attitude influencing him.

Arthur Weasley arrived home from work feeling quite pleased with him self, it seemed that his talk to Molly that morning had had the desired effect, she had not floo called him to tell him to contact Sirius Black so she must have rearranged the rooms of the children. He had just sat down to his usual cup of fresh strong tea when Ginny rushed into the kitchen and begged him to go with her to see Hermione's bedroom. Allowing Ginny to pull him along Arthur began to wonder what was going on, when instead of pulling him toward the stairs Ginny was pulling him toward the back door.

Normally Arthur would have been angry with anyone who messed with his collection of Muggle things, but looking into the hut with its stove pot warming the place nicely, and Harry and Hermione sitting on a bed holding hands and reading, he was pleased with what he saw. Arthur stepped into what this morning had been his old work shed, the change that had taken place surprised even him, it was now a very comfortable bedroom, tapestries and a fully carpeted floor helped to keep the place warm while adding colour to the once slightly rundown and dingy shed. Looking around the room Arthur found him self thinking it a great pity that conjured items would only last for a few weeks at most, this room was excellent.

Back in the kitchen Molly waited for the shouting to begin, the longer the silence went on the closer she stood to the open window, finally the curiosity getting the better of her she made her way out to the

shed, she found her husband sitting on the bed with Harry, Hermione, and Ginny, discussing the book she had loaned to Hermione.

Standing in the doorway she chuckled “So Mr Weasley, I take it all this meets with your approval.”

Arthur grinned at his wife “Marvellous my dear, worthy of an extra cuddle later,” he said with a little wink.

The rest of the week for Harry, Hermione, and Ginny was a very happy one, on the two rainy days, while the boys sat in their rooms feeling bored, the new trio as Harry liked to call them, played around the house playing hide and go seek or reading, occasionally filling an hour with I spy. Molly Weasleys cooking was just as Harry had remembered it, he watched in the late afternoons as Molly taught the girls how to cook, occasionally he would make a mental note to himself about making some small change to one of the many recipes he had stored in his head.

Harry and Hermione enjoyed sleeping in the shed; they sat and spent time together reading or doing their homework each evening. Before getting undressed ready for bed, Harry cast a warming charm around the room each evening as the fire dimmed, then together he and Hermione climbed into the large comfortable bed and slept peacefully in each others arms. It was he thought, oh so much better than sharing Ron’s old room.

The whole week had turned out to be one of the best Harry had ever spent at the Burrow; he was really pleased with his decision to become an ordinary eleven year old boy. The fun he had with Hermione and Ginny learning how to be a young boy with nothing to worry about was his happiest time yet, once or twice he actually felt sorry for Ron who spent most of his time in his room, it was more than likely he would be lying on his bed feeling bored all the through the holiday.

Hermione was really pleased that Harry was so willing to join in with her and Ginny even with the more feminine stuff. There was something slightly different about Harry, something that was good that she did not quite understand but she liked the small change in

him, he seemed to give more thought to her and she liked that. That week they became even closer than they had been, her young love for him was growing and beginning to mature.

They almost accepted Molly and Arthur's invitation to stay until after Christmas, it was such a tempting offer, but Harry wanted to spend some time with his godfather Sirius, and Christmas seemed to be the right time for them both to get to know the man.

They were both sad when they left the Burrow, promising to keep on writing their letters to her they both hugged Ginny before saying bye for now. Teary goodbyes were said to Ginny and Mrs Weasley as Mr Weasley grabbed their trunks then he used a port key to take the young couple to London and Grimmauld place to stay with Sirius for the rest of the holiday.

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A/Note, I just want to thank all those of you who have been reviewing this story, reviews cheer up my day so thanks again.

## Chapter Twelve

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### The short stay at Grimmauld Place

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Harry and Hermione met Sirius on the door step of number twelve Grimmauld place, Mr Weasley wished the two Potters a merry Christmas before leaving them with Sirius for the rest of the holiday. It was Hermione's first visit to the dark old house, and she did not like what she felt when she walked into the hall. To her it felt like the house actually hated her, she could not understand the way she felt, and it did not help when they met Kreacher, she took an instant dislike to the ugly old elf who insisted on calling her a filthy mudblood.

Hermione became so frightened of something that was in the house that she would not let go of Harry even when she was desperate to use the toilet; she felt certain that if she let him go, then whatever it was that was in the house would take him away from her for ever. She was unable to eat or to relax anywhere they sat in the kitchen, and she had no idea why. She had never felt so scared in her life before. She felt that she had to get Harry away from the house to some place safe, and no matter what Harry said she just could not rid herself of the feeling.

Only four hours after their arrival at Grimmauld place Harry sat in the kitchen and told Sirius about Hermione's feeling and that as much as he himself wanted to stay with his godfather, he would have to leave because he was taking Hermione back to the Burrow. "Something about the house is terrifying Hermione and we need to leave," Harry told Sirius.

"Harry I don't know what it is, but I've also felt that there is something wrong here, I thought it was just me what with spending all that time in Azkaban thanks to wormtail, but if Hermione can feel it too then I agree you should definitely take her back to the Burrow and stay there until I find what it is causing this," Sirius said agreeing with his godson.

It was as Sirius spoke that Harry remembered the Horcrux locket containing a piece of Voldemort's soul. It was somewhere in this house, and it could well be that with her greater magical power Hermione was feeling the evil from it. Maybe she had sensed the malevolence of Voldemort, he wasn't sure but it seemed to be the only explanation he could come up with.

"Sirius while I take Hermione to the Burrow, there is something you need to find; somewhere in the house there is a locket, a rather heavy gold or silver locket. It may have a snake design on it, it can't be opened in a normal way, you need to find it and get it to Dumbledore as quick as you can. You must let me know as soon as Dumbledore has it," Harry told his guardian "I have to destroy it."

Sirius looked at Harry and knew he was being serious, "Why do you think you have to destroy it, what is it that can't be dealt with by Dumbledore or my self?" Sirius wanted to know.

"Sirius as my godfather and best friend of my dad, I'm going to trust you with a secret, a secret that you must never divulge unless I or Hermione ask you too," Harry said with a grave voice that belied his appearance.

Sirius sat up straighter in his chair as he looked at Harry, "Come with us," Harry told Sirius as he and Hermione got up and walked to the entrance hall.

Once in the entrance hall Harry stood in front of the offensive portrait of Sirius's mother,

"How many people have tried to remove this painting?" he asked Sirius.

"Just about everyone, including Dumbledore," Sirius answered wondering how Harry knew about the picture.

'Hermione love, there is a vile piece of dark magic contained in a picture behind this curtain, it needs to be removed and I want you to do it. I want you to get rid of it without using your wand or your hands,

I want you to get rid of it by just thinking about it, just like we have been practicing' Harry thought to her just before he opened the curtain.

Hermione did the job of demonstrating her power better than Harry had anticipated, as the portrait began yelling its obscenities at them, Hermione pointed her finger at the wicked old woman, "Hey you, be quiet, I'm trying to think," she said calmly and the portrait became instantly quiet.

'How about I banish this thing to the north pole?' Hermione asked Harry as they looked at the now quiet picture.

'That's not a bad idea, I hope the old crone can feel the cold' Harry thought back moments before the painting vanished.

Sirius stood and gaped at the two youngsters, they were not even teenagers yet, and one of them had just done something even Dumbledore had failed at. He didn't even know which of them had done it, neither of them had so much as blinked. Hermione had shut his mother up just by telling her to be quiet and Sirius wondered just how powerful his two children were.

"It was Hermione if you are wondering," Harry told Sirius "and that took only a tiny amount of our magic."

Sirius wondered what Harry meant when he said it took just a tiny amount of 'our magic', was it possible that through their bond their magic was also connected, could it be possible that when one of them used magic they used their combined power to do things. It was a lot to take in all at once and Sirius knew he needed to talk to them about these things.

"There is something else we want to share with you, there seems to be no limit on our power," Harry said bringing Sirius out of his thoughts. "And we can talk to each other," Harry said as though revealing another secret.

"Well I know that, don't I," Sirius chuckled

“Without speaking,” Harry added.

Did Harry actually mean they could talk to each other without having to say a single word out loud? Sirius had heard tales of telepaths, but if they had ever existed they had died out well over a thousand years ago.

“It comes in handy sometimes,” Harry said as Sirius began to realise the amazing power of his godson and his young wife.

‘Harry, please I really want to leave this place’ Hermione thought as Harry smiled at Sirius.

“Ok sweetheart, I’ll take you to the Burrow now,” he answered her before opening the front door.

Harry stood on the door step and wrapped his arms around Hermione, “Sirius find that locket as quick as you can, and don’t try to destroy it your self, it’s a Horcrux and it could be fatal. I’ll tell you everything later but remember its our secret. Oh can you bring our trunks with you later, we’ll be at the Burrow.”

Harry then did something else Sirius had never heard of before, he wrapped his arms around Hermione and disapparated silently without having moved a muscle. Harry must be one hell of a powerful Wizard Sirius said to himself. Then he remembered Harry was only eleven, there was no way he should be able to disapparate, and to take Hermione with him was just about impossible with out a lot of experience. Sirius definitely needed to talk to his young ward and his wife, and soon. He began the search for the locket as soon as he had closed the door.

A very surprised Molly Weasley answered the knock on the back door of the Burrow to find Harry and Hermione standing there. Hermione was looking rather pale as she clung to Harry. Molly looked around the yard for Sirius, as Harry began to speak “Mrs Weasley, you know how you invited us to stay here over Christmas, well I wonder if we could take back our refusal and accept your invitation.”

Molly ushered the two children into the kitchen and gave them both a warm hug before she began to ask any questions. "So what happened, and how did you get here," she asked as she indicated them to sit, she waved her wand and two mugs appeared in front of them.

It was the first time Hermione had really said much about what had bothered her since their arrival at the Black house. "There was something evil in the house, it wanted to take Harry away from me. I don't know what it was but I felt it, and it was awful," Hermione told Molly.

Molly was pouring them some tea when Ginny came down from upstairs; she rushed over to Hermione and gave her a hug as though they had not seen each other for weeks. She then turned to Harry who immediately gave her a friendly hug.

"Are you just visiting or did you change your mind, please say you changed your mind," Ginny gushed as she held Hermione's hands.

'Hermione love why don't you go have some fun with Ginny while I tell Mrs Weasley what happened' Harry thought to his wife.

Hermione rose and with a nod she allowed Ginny to drag her away from the kitchen. Harry was about to tell Molly Weasley why they had left Grimmauld place due to Hermione being a little more powerful than the normal witch her age, and he knew exactly how she would react. So taking a deep breath and preparing himself for the coming bone crusher Harry began to tell her.

"And some where in the house is a Horcrux, I asked Sirius to find it and get it to Dumbledore as fast as he can," Harry finished his explanation.

Just as he expected Molly moved toward him and then dragged him into one of her famous hugs "You poor children, what an awful thing," she said as she crushed the breath out of him.

After a long talk to Ginny and a little time to soak up the friendly atmosphere of the Burrow Hermione was back to her old self, all the feeling of dread and fear were gone, down stairs Harry could feel the

change as Hermione became happy once again. He did not like it when Hermione was so frightened she would not let go of him for an instant, he had never experienced it before, and he hoped he could prevent it ever happening to her again.

Having finished his tea and being told by Molly that they were welcome to stay at the Burrow as long as they wanted, Harry asked if it would be ok to join the girls in Ginny's room, Molly told him it was ok and that he was to remind Ginny that it was her turn to help with the cooking. "Tell her to come down in an hour, please, there's a good lad," Molly said as she started some sprouts peeling themselves.

Harry went up stairs and joined the girls who were discussing something about the new fashions. Harry picked up one of Ginny's books and began to flip through the pages. Five minutes later Harry was sitting on the bed reading the story of Harry Potter the boy who lived. It gave him quite a laugh when he tried to picture himself as the book portrayed him. Hermione blushed a little as she admitted to liking the story about him.

When the time came for Ginny to go down and help her mother Hermione offered to help as well, she wanted to learn to cook as well as Mrs Weasley, so that she could take care of her husband properly when the time came, Harry offered to help as well "Less work for everyone," he shrugged as they made their way down stairs to the kitchen.

While peeling potatoes the Muggle way Harry made up his mind to tell Mr Weasley as much as he dared about Voldemort and his hidden Horcrux's, it might be helpful him knowing before Ginny goes off to school he thought to him self.

Mr Weasley arrived home from work just before the evening meal was ready, he had just stepped from the bathroom when he heard the knock on the door "I'll get that Molly love," he said as everyone else took their seats.

Arthur Weasley opened the door and found a very queasy looking Sirius standing on his door step, "Hello Sirius come on in, sit your self at the table," Arthur told him. It was then he noticed just how queasy

Sirius looked, maybe he should not have mentioned anything that reminded Sirius of food he thought just as Molly asked if he would be eating with them.

Sirius pulled his Gryffindor courage together and took a seat at the table. "I found the locket, but I wish I had used some dragon skin gloves or something; the thing made me feel really miserable. Any way Dumbledore now has it safely locked away where it can do no harm, he wants to see you as soon as possible Harry. I told him that it would not be tonight as I think your young lady needs your company." Sirius was saying as they all dug into the feast Mrs Weasley always provided.

'Yes tomorrow would be soon enough' Harry thought as he heaped some mashed potatoes onto his plate 'It was worth the change of plan just to eat another of Molly's meals'

By the time Harry and Hermione left the comfort of the Weasley living room to go to bed in the old shed they were both feeling very happy with life. Sirius would be spending the night at the Burrow, even though he would have to sleep in the living room. The day had seemed awfully long to both of them as Harry and Hermione entered the shed, but it was now over and tomorrow was hours away. For now they were both tired and they would soon be lying comfortably in each others arms, Hermione smiled 'I love you Harry Potter'.

'I love you too Hermione Potter' Harry sleepily replied smiling as he closed his eyes.

## Chapter Thirteen

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### Birds and the bees

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Harry woke Sirius at seven in the morning with a fresh cup of piping hot tea, once he was sure that Sirius was awake Harry sat down opposite him and explained the reason for him being woken up. "I promised you yesterday that I would let you into our secret, so when we have drunk our tea, there is a clearing in the wood where I can do a little demonstrating. I've left Hermione in bed thought she might like the extra sleep," Harry told his godfather.

'What sleep would that be Harry James Potter?' Hermione's voice in his head asked him.

'I thought you were asleep sweetheart, anyway you'll be better off in bed it's freezing outside' he told her and heard her sigh.

'It's not really much fun being in bed alone' she pouted.

'Hermione Jane Potter, if anyone could hear you they would think we do more than just sleep in our bed' Harry chuckled at her.

'Well we will do one day you know, remember mum told me all about the birds and the bees you know, so I know what to do.' she boasted.

'Well as I don't have a mum, you'll have to tell me all about these birds and the bees' Harry replied then burst out laughing.

Sirius looked at Harry for a moment then realised he was having a conversation with Hermione, who just happened to be in a different building. Sirius found it all a little hard to accept, his eleven year old godson was doing things well beyond anything he had seen anyone else do. As soon as Sirius had finished his tea Harry led him to a clearing in the Weasley wood. After creating a warming charm over

the area Harry asked a dumbfounded Sirius what he would like to see him do.

“What you mean more than the warming charm, or Hermione dealing with that Portrait of my mother, oh I don’t know how about transfiguring that lump of wood into a nice cosy chair,” Sirius grinned.

“What you mean like that,” Harry asked as the chair appeared “or should I conjure us a nice couch to relax on, or maybe you might like a nice fireplace with a roaring fire,” Harry said as the things he mentioned all appeared in the clearing.

“Ok Harry, I’m convinced, and you say Hermione can do all this as well, eh?” Sirius was impressed, some of the things Harry had just done he would have been really hard pressed to do himself. “So when did all this power start to develop?”

“Everything became more powerful when Hermione kissed me and we were bonded,” Harry answered as he vanished the things he had conjured.

Making their way back to the Burrow Harry asked Sirius if he would accompany him to Hogwarts “I’m going to need someone to watch Hermione for me. I don’t want her getting close to that Horcrux again till she is fully able to control her magical core,” he said as the house came in sight.

“Ah there’s another thing, how do you know about Horcrux’s when reference to them is not found in any ordinary wizarding books,” Sirius asked stopping just inside the tree line.

“I can’t tell you that Sirius because I don’t know how it happened,” Harry answered hoping Sirius wouldn’t press the point, “I also know that I need Gryffindor’s sword to destroy that lump of evil.”

“Harry no one knows where that sword is, or even if it is real.” Sirius sighed if Harry thought he needed the sword of Gryffindor to destroy the Horcrux they could well be in for a rough time getting rid of Voldemort. The fabled sword of Gryffindor had vanished when the great man had died, and had never been seen since. There were

rumours that it was hidden somewhere within the walls of Hogwarts but no one had found it yet.

"It'll be there when I need it," Harry said confidently as they resumed their walk.

Back in the Burrow it seemed that everyone was up and they were all busy eating one of Molly's large breakfasts. Hermione watched as Harry sat down with Sirius, while Sirius ate a good breakfast, Harry only ate a morsel. Hermione was not happy about the feelings she was getting from Harry and she wanted to know what it was he was keeping from her.

Harry sat poking his food and chasing it around the plate, he had to destroy the Horcrux without getting anyone hurt by the dark magic it was surrounded with. He remembered how they had done it before and how he had let Ron strike the final blow. Ron was not around this time though and he himself was just a boy. He remembered Dumbledore's blackened hand, then memories of all those that had died fighting the evil that had ruined so many lives and he resolved to get the job done as fast as possible.

He would begin at the weekend, he already knew where the hidden bits of Voldemort's soul were located and if he destroyed them all before the most evil wizard known got him self a new body then he could finish the fight so much quicker, save so many more lives.

At nine o clock Harry, Hermione, and Sirius, left the Burrow through the floo network and arrived just a few seconds later in the Three Broomsticks. Saying a quick hello to Rosemerta the three of them hurried from Hogsmeade to Hogwarts School. The walk up to the school was difficult and cold. Snow lay several feet thick in places where it had drifted on the fierce winter winds of the mountains. Hermione used a blasting spell three times and a heat spell a few times to help move some of the deeper drifts. When they finally arrived at the gates to the great school, Hagrid was the one who came to let them in. Harry marvelled at the sight of the Hogwarts grounds, the deep snow lay unblemished apart from the rather large foot prints of Hagrid. Harry could not recall the last time he had seen

the snow at Hogwarts when it had not contained the multitude of footprints of the many students.

They were met at the main door to the castle by Albus Dumbledore, headmaster of the school and leader of the opposition to all dark magic.

Dumbledore led them to the shrieking shack where he had placed the Horcrux under several strong security charms and protective spells.

All five of them entered the old shack that had once served as a temporary refuge for Remus Lupin during his time at Hogwarts. The Horcrux was recovered by the headmaster and as it was placed on a small rickety table in the centre of the room Hermione began to shrink away from the dark evil it contained, she did not shrink for long though because as Harry approached it she stepped forward with him.

“Hermione sweetheart I want you to join the others and go find somewhere safe. I really don’t want you to have to see the things this thing will do to try and prevent its being destroyed,” Harry told her as he sensed her joining him.

“Harry you can send the others away, but you need me here with you, together our magic will defeat this thing, we are strong as a team,” she told him in a tone he knew meant she would not leave him alone.

Harry sighed, he had hoped she would do as he asked, he knew that none of their companions were powerful enough to force her to leave with them even if it was for her own safety. Harry remembered how the locket had used lies and deceit on Ron the last time it was destroyed and he knew for sure it would do the same thing again, he wasn’t sure if Hermione was ready for the sort of things it might show them.

Harry gave up trying to get Hermione to leave him to deal with the Horcrux after several failed attempts, he described what it may be like and how scary it might be but she was determined that though she could feel the evil emanating from the locket and that in itself scared her she was going to stay with her husband. Hermione’s bravery caused Harry another problem when Sirius, Dumbledore, and Hagrid

all refused to leave the two youngest alone to destroy the evil. Harry tried to control his exasperation with his companions as he called for Fawkes and the Sword of Godric Gryffindor to help.

A bright flash of fire announced the arrival of the headmasters Phoenix, he arrived carrying the sorting hat. Harry picked up the hat from where Fawkes dropped it and not caring how silly he looked, he removed his shoes then took off his socks; they were a good thick pair of woollen socks knitted by Molly Weasley. Accompanied by chuckles and giggles from the other members of the group Harry folded his socks up then balanced them on top of his head before placing the sorting hat over them. He had remembered how the arrival of Gryffindors sword had nearly knocked him out the last time he had used it, he had no intention of having another headache from the huge hilt as it hit him again.

With the hat on his head Harry moved to within an arms length of the locket and once again called for Gryffindors sword to help him rid the world of the evil. The dull thunk of the sword hilt hitting his socks still made Harry's eyes cross for an instant and caused him to stumble a little before he reached up and carefully removed the hat, taking the magical sword of his ancestor from the hat he asked the others, including Hermione to step back as far as they could.

Harry raised the sword to strike the final blow when the locket popped open and the image of the sword hitting Hermione on her head hovered above the little table. The Horcrux was trying to persuade Harry to kill Hermione. Harry grinned at the very idea 'Just shows how stupid Voldemort really is' he thought before the image changed and Harry could see Hermione kissing Ron Weasley passionately. The image moved on to her making love with the redhead before with all his strength Harry swung the huge sword down onto the locket.

The scream that echoed around the shack had them all but Harry cringing with their hands firmly placed over their ears, swinging the sword one more time Harry cleaved the evil item in two. The screaming stopped to be replaced by a silence that was only broken by the heavy breathing of the room's occupants.

Harry noticed Hermione standing next to Dumbledore crying, tears flowed down her cheeks as she sobbed uncontrolled in to her hands. Gently taking her in his arms he pulled her to him and whispered in her ear that it was over, it was done they had destroyed the Horcrux.

Hermione looked up into his eyes "Harry I wouldn't, I swear I would never do anything like that, you have to believe me," she cried then she dropped her head on his chest and cried "I wouldn't, I wouldn't."

Harry slowly placed a hand under her chin and lifted her face to him, "Hermione love, I know you would never do anything like that, it was just the evil in the locket using the most evil thing it could come up with, it was some thing like a nightmare to try and protect its self. It tried to get me to kill you, but I knew our love was stronger than anything else in the world, so stop all these tears and give your husband a little smile." Harry stood and held Hermione close with his arms around her and his head resting on top of hers until she calmed down.

'Harry that was horrible, I was terrified you might not love me anymore' Hermione thought as her tears finally stopped.

'There is nothing in this universe that could ever stop me loving you, you are mine now and I'm yours, for all time remember, for all eternity Mrs Potter' Harry replied.

Dumbledore picked up the pieces of the now destroyed locket while Sirius picked up the sword, he was surprised by the weight of the thing and wondered how Harry had managed to wield it so easily, 'must be the magic of Gryffindor' he decided as they made their way back to the castle.

Albus Dumbledore wanted to know how Harry had called Fawkes to him and where the sword had come from. Harry simply replied that he did not know, he just knew he would need the sword, and Fawkes had done the rest.

Dumbledore was deep in thought about the morning's events when Sirius coughed loudly.

"Does it matter? All the how's and why's, isn't it enough to know that the task is done, and done well I might add," he said looking from Harry to the headmaster.

"Shall we go back to the Burrow now?" Harry asked smiling. 'Then you my love can tell me all about the birds and the bees' he joked.

Hermione turned a nice shade of pink as she followed Dumbledore from the shack 'I'll show you one day Harry' she said before asking "Are you coming you two."

## Chapter Fourteen.

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### Caught at Honeydukes.

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Back at the Burrow Harry sat and listened as Dumbledore talked about the Horcrux. He had asked Harry several times how he had known about such things but Harry just repeated that he did not know how he knew, he just did. Harry also told them he knew all about the prophesy and the danger it had put him in, again he told them he did not know how he knew, he just knew. Dumbledore had always kept vital information and things from Harry before so Harry was not too bothered by turning the tables on the old teacher and keeping him in the dark.

Albus Dumbledore became convinced that Harry's knowledge was the power the dark lord knew not, and Harry was content to let him think that way, it was so much easier than trying to explain the truth. When Harry told Dumbledore that there were even more Horcrux's and where they were to be found, all but two of them that is, the adults looked at him as though he were quite mad.

"You can help me to collect them so that I can destroy them or you can help me by not trying to stop me," Harry told them as he ended his story.

Albus Dumbledore had been working on this theory since the reappearance of Voldemort when he had possessed the young professor Quirrell, but he had had no proof for his theory until Harry verified it with the finding and destruction of the locket, now he immediately began to make plans for the members of Order of the Phoenix who knew what they were to collect the vile articles so that Harry, the 'chosen one' could do what he was destined to do and rid them of Voldemort for good.

As Dumbledore left the Burrow with Sirius, Harry watched his wife Hermione and their now best friend Ginny Weasley as they laughed

and giggled over by the oven, something they were cooking, or trying to cook, must have gone wrong. Harry smiled to himself at the now two best friends, the two girls in his life that made it all worth everything he had been through, and would have to go through again.

Ginny had been Harry's only girl friend in his previous life and as he watched the two girls enjoying themselves doing girly things he had never seen either of them do in that former existence he felt a deep sense of remorse for what he must have put Hermione through, she had loved him then just as she did now, but then he had never realised how she felt about him, and he had even gone as far as asking her advice on how to ask other girls for a date.

The first person he had gone to when the dates had been a miserable failure was Hermione. She was always the one he had turned to, she had been the one he told when he had fancied Ginny because of her long red hair. He had treated the one person who actually loved him unconditionally in an unknowingly cruel way. He had even spent a few weeks as Ginny's boyfriend quite happily kissing Ginny in front of Hermione, the pain that must have caused her made him flinch when he thought about it. This time he would get things right, this time he would devote his entire life to keeping Hermione as safe and happy as he could, he vowed to him self.

Once they had returned to Hogwarts Harry realised that keeping his vow to keep her safe was not going to be as easy as he had hoped. The day that Remus Lupin had brought them Hufflepuffs cup Hermione had refused point blank to leave Harry to deal with the Horcrux alone. She had stood by his side as he cleaved the cup in two with Gryffindor's magical sword, shielding him from a blast of dark magic.

Harry's main problem with his vow was that he had to rid the world of an evil murderous wizard, and Hermione knew that there were two of the Horcrux remaining, two that for some reason Harry had not told about. His wife being a loyal, brave, and determined person would not allow him to do the task alone. That was the reason he found himself in a small hidden valley outside the school grounds, on the first Saturday back at Hogwarts teaching Hermione how to disapparate.

Disapparating meant disappearing from one place and reappearing in another place, sometimes hundreds of miles away. It was one of the very last things taught to those in their seventeenth year and they were not allowed to do it outside school until after their seventeenth birthday and a test to get a license. Harry and Hermione were still in their first years at the school, they still had a long time to go by before they reached their seventeenth birthdays.

Hermione was an exceptionally clever twelve year old, and with the amount of power she shared with Harry it only took her four lessons to perfect the task. Four short lessons and Hermione was able to travel home to her parent's house in the blink of an eye. The first time she had appeared in her mothers kitchen had caused her mother to drop the lunch she was cooking for Hermione's dad.

Sneaking in and out of the school was not quite as easy for Harry and Hermione as it had been for him in his last life, he did not yet own a special map that would reveal the position of everyone in the school. Getting back into the school undetected was just as hard, and this day was going to prove just how hard it is to stay hidden even with an invisibility cloak over them.

Hidden under his invisibility cloak they made their way through the back streets of Hogsmeade, it was the best way of avoiding bumping into anyone; the really hard part was when they reached Honeydukes, the local sweetshop. Usually they would have to wait, sometimes several minutes until a customer distracted who ever was serving behind the counter giving them enough time to sneak carefully down to the cellar.

They were standing snuggled together under the cloak, pushed into a corner where the only space available was between two displays of chocolate frogs. Harry and Hermione both turned to look when they heard the bell above the door; Harry's heart sank as he watched Albus Dumbledore enter the shop.

Dumbledore ordered his regular supply of lemon drops "Thank you Mrs Duke it is so good of you to obtain these Muggle sweets for me, though I would seem to be the only one who really enjoys them."

Mrs Duke seemed a tiny bit flustered when Dumbledore gave her a tiny wink and a broad smile as he turned to leave the shop. Harry watched as the headmaster looked in their direction, he knew that the headmaster knew they were there, somehow he seemed to see through the cloak.

“Well I’ll bid you goodbye Mrs Duke, do give my felicitations to your husband, and if you were to see two stray pupils in the shop I think it would be a good idea to tell them to join me on the walk back to the school,” Albus said as he moved toward the door.

Mrs Duke looking totally confused agreed to send any pupils she might see back to school.

As the headmaster paused at the door way holding the door open and looking around the shop Harry knew for certain that they had been seen. Taking Hermione’s hand he led her to the doorway and out on to the street past the wily old man. Together they walked toward Hogwarts; they had gone several hundred yards from the village when Dumbledore spoke.

“You can remove the cloak now Harry,” he chuckled at the unseen looks on the young peoples faces; he did love to surprise his pupils.

Harry did as the headmaster said and removed the cloak, he thought rapidly of several excuses for being out of school, but each one seemed more feeble than the one before so he said nothing, they just continued walking.

Dumbledore offered them a lemon drop before he asked why they were out of bounds.

Hermione was the one who answered “I’m afraid we can’t tell you that professor, there was something we needed to do and it could not be done at school.”

Harry stared at her for a moment and wondered why she had told him that, surprisingly Dumbledore just nodded his head several times and muttered “I see.”

Once back at school they were both given a short lecture on how unsafe it was to go wandering around alone. Harry was amazed that they had not been expelled or received detentions or had any house points taken from them. Dumbledore it seemed was quite content with Hermione's answer. The truth was that he could not bring himself to punish them for something he had done himself so many times when he had been a pupil.

Albus Dumbledore was certain that his two young students were out of the school grounds to practice with their amazing amount of magical power, and though he was a little disappointed that they had not asked for his help, he was also sure that with the power they possessed then any magic they performed with it was best done away from prying eyes, "Well I would be happier if the next time you see the need to practice you inform me before hand." He told them as they left his office.

Half way through the term Harry had destroyed all the Horcrux's that he had told Dumbledore about and he was planning how to be rid of the last two, one of them would be fairly easy and if he did things right he could end the career of someone he hated. It was not the person he hated it was all that the person stood for. Harry intended to put the person where they belonged, in Azkaban.

The last Quidditch match of the year Harry caught the snitch after a hard and dirty game by his teams opponents the Slytherin house, hoisted up on the shoulders of his fellow Gryffindor's Harry was paraded through the castle, normally he hated praise and recognition but this time the praise was for something he had done himself, something that had nothing to do with being the boy who lived.

Hermione hugged him tight as the quidditch team placed him down in the centre of the common room, giving him a kiss that almost made his toes curl in the process.

"Harry you did it, you won us the house cup," she said as she worked out all the house points for the year.

The last two hours before catching the Hogwarts express to London Harry, Hermione, and Neville spent with Hagrid in his hut talking about the sort of lessons Hagrid would give if he were to be a teacher, and being Hagrid he told them tales of things that made them all cringe at the very thought.

Having wished Hagrid goodbye and promising to visit more often next term the three friends collected their trunks and joined the rest of the school heading for Hogsmeade station. They were on their way home, Neville to be with his Gran and Harry and Hermione were going to stay with the Grangers.

## Chapter Fifteen.

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### Holidays

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Harry and Hermione had been having a brilliant holiday with the Grangers; they had both been sleeping in Hermione's old bedroom for the first two weeks. As a family they had all been on a huge shopping spree, and Harry had been on his first visit to a cinema, had his first ice cream with strawberries and several other firsts in this life, and for the two weeks the Grangers had given Harry more fun, enjoyment, and love than he had ever known with the Dursleys.

Mr Granger had even bought a new bed for them; it was during their second week of the holiday that Hermione discovered Mrs Weasley had written a very long letter to her parents telling them of what had happened when the couple had to sleep in different rooms. She had even sent them a copy of the page that told how it could actually cause harm if they were separated; though Hermione was convinced her parents must have known about the effects of soul-mates being kept apart as they had been through it themselves and they had had to sleep in different houses suffering the separation until the following morning.

Then for their third week they had enjoyed a week at the seaside, for three days Mr Granger had been trying to teach Harry how to play golf, much to the delight of both Hermione and her mum who had been left rolling around the greens in fits of laughter several times by Harry's mistakes and accidents. At least three times he had let his club fly out of his hands having missed the ball completely, he had dug several holes into the fairway along the way including one fairly large hole in the middle of a sand bunker, he had also fallen over several times as he swung the club a little too enthusiastically.

Harry huffed "Well I have tomorrow left to get a hole in one," as they entered their hotel after another disastrous episode with his golf club,

he had had to do a quick repair spell on someone's car when his club had sailed right through the rear window.

"I thought we might spend tomorrow safely on the beach," Mrs Granger said grinning at Harry as he pulled a funny face.

'I've never been on a beach, in fact I have never seen the sea close up until this week' he told Hermione as they reached the door to their room.

Mrs Granger gave Harry a quick kiss on his cheek "Meet you two down stairs for dinner in about an hour Ok," she said as she followed Mr Granger into the room next door.

Walking into their room, Hermione flopped onto the bed 'I'm rather looking forward to spending sometime on the beach; it'll give me a chance to wear my bathing costume at last'.

'Is that the red bikini you tried on at home?' Harry asked frowning.

"Good grief no," Hermione gasped "I'm not wearing that on the beach, that's for your eyes only, after all it reveals far too much."

"That's what I was thinking," Harry said with a chuckle "how anyone could call that tiny triangle of cloth a belt and a piece of string a bathing costume is beyond me, it's nice to know that if you do wear it, it's just for me though."

Hermione lifted her head from the bed "Harry Potter if I didn't know better I would say you don't want me wearing a bathing costume on the beach," she said smiling.

"Yes well, all those people staring at you, I mean you are getting to be rather sexy to look at, what with your things growing and all," Harry said going a little red.

"Harry love I'm only twelve..."

"Nearly thirteen," Harry interrupted her.

"Ok so I'm only thirteen I'm not-, I mean-, Harry do you really think I look sexy?" she asked sitting up.

"Of course I do, you are getting more womanly shaped every week, if you know what I mean," he answered slightly surprised that she could still make him blush.

Hermione had not really given any serious thought to the sex part of being married to Harry before that moment, but when he said she was sexy it stirred something in her mind. She now realised that he too was developing, he might not have breasts or hips that would change and be visible to the world, but he was growing more muscular, his voice was changing getting a little deeper and he was becoming a young man, and young men began to think of things like the birds and the bees, and she was the one he thought of as sexy.

Hermione smiled to herself, she was quite pleased that Harry thought she was sexy, it didn't matter to her if every other boy in the world thought she was ugly, Harry thought she was sexy. That evening Hermione held her head up as they walked into the dinning room of the hotel, for the first time in her life she no longer felt like a little girl.

The following week was spent with Sirius at Grimmauld place, they had entered the house with feelings of trepidation, but the house was a different place it was clean, and a whole lot brighter and friendlier than it had been. Kreacher was still rather unpleasant to Hermione but he cleaned and cooked for them.

They had spent several happy hours wandering around the house discovering some of its secrets. Sirius turned out to be a rather likeable rogue who played tricks on them, he still loved a good prank and did his best to catch Harry and Hermione with one every day. They in turn played several pranks on Sirius; the last one they played on him was Harry's favourite.

At just before four in the morning on the day they were to return to the Grangers, Harry woke Hermione and together they crept up to Sirius's bedroom. Harry carefully and quietly opened the window then expanded the opening so that it was large enough to drive a bus through, while he did that Hermione levitated Sirius's bed and

carefully guided it out through the now huge window. Then together they took turns in levitating the bed to the local park, Harry did the final stage by levitating the still snoring Sirius and his bed onto a small island in the middle of the park lake. They then sat down on one of the many park benches, finding one that was hidden under a weeping willow tree they cuddled together as they waited for Sirius to wake up.

They were both roused from sleep by the sound of laughter. Stretching trying to get the rid of the stiffness caused by falling asleep on a park bench Harry and Hermione peered through the branches of the willow to see who was doing all the laughing, there on the island sitting in the grass with his feet dangling in the lake, Sirius was roaring with laughter, he thought it was one of the best pranks ever played on him.

Following their stay with Sirius they were invited to the Burrow by Ginny, both Harry and Hermione eagerly accepted the invite. Hermione gave Ginny their answer in one of her regular letters, telling her that they would be going back to stay with her parents for a few days until the day after Harry's birthday; she invited Ginny to stay with them for the week after getting permission from her parents.

An hour after arriving back home from Grimmauld Place, Hermione left Harry talking to her mother in the kitchen while she went to answer the door bell, standing on the door step looking extremely excited was Ginny accompanied by Mr Weasley. After breath squeezing hugs were exchanged Hermione led the way into the kitchen, Ginny rushed over to Harry and gave him a famous Weasley hug while Hermione introduced Mr Weasley to her mum.

Mr Weasley stayed for a cup of tea and a rather long look at all the appliances in the kitchen while Hermione took Ginny up to the guest room.

"Oh I'm so excited Hermione, I've never been invited anywhere before," Ginny said as she bounced on the balls of her feet, "I've only ever been to London, and that was just to the station to see the boys off."

Hermione and Ginny sat on the bed exchanging stories of the holidays. Hermione told Ginny about the pranks played on Sirius and a few of the ones he had played on her and Harry.

Down stairs Mr Weasley had finished his tea and was about to leave when Harry realised he would never get a better chance to tell Arthur all about the Horcrux's, "Can I have a word with you sir before you leave," Harry asked as Arthur thanked Mrs Granger for the tea.

Mr Weasley went to sit back down as he said "Certainly Harry."

"Perhaps outside might be better," Harry said then apologised to Mrs Granger "I'm afraid this is rather delicate and private."

Mrs Granger thought that having no father figure he could turn to, maybe Harry needed to ask Mr Weasley for some fatherly advice on a certain young lady because he could not be expected to ask the father of the girl in question. She nodded at him then left them alone as Harry and Arthur walked out of the door into the back garden. Once he was sure he was out of hearing of the house Harry cleared his throat, "Mr Weasley sir, I know that you are a member of the order of the Phoenix. I need to ask, did professor Dumbledore tell you about the Horcrux's?"

"No Harry though I do know about the locket. Molly has good hearing," he answered looking Harry in the eye.

"Well there were seven of them, Voldemort made them to help him become immortal, I have destroyed five of them," Harry then told Arthur how with help from Dumbledore and Gryffindor's sword he had destroyed them.

Arthur listened without interrupting as Harry spoke, "There are just two left now and I know where they both are and I have a good idea on how to get hold of one of them. I just wondered if you would be willing to help when the time comes?" Harry said as they walked around the garden.

"Of course Harry, anything I can do to help stop that fiend," Arthur replied without hesitation.

“Good, very good, you see I believe that you may be with me when I find it,” Harry said “I can’t tell you anything more just yet, I don’t want the person who has it changing his plans or we might never find it again.”

Arthur looked at Harry with a solemn expression “What ever it takes Harry. What ever it takes.”

Mrs Granger helped by Hermione and Ginny spent the week organising a birthday party for Harry. She arranged for his best friend Neville along with the quidditch team to attend. Ginny sent the twins a letter telling them there were to be no pranks as the party was being held in a Muggle neighbourhood. The twins though not to happy about it actually decided not to do anything, and to allow Harry to have a normal party. Well as normal as a party for a wizard could be.

The day before the party Harry got a very unexpected but very pleasant surprise when Hermione read out from her copy of the Daily Prophet the headline story ‘Cornelius Fudge, former minister for magic was arrested today on charges of corruption, Fudge had been caught red handed accepting bribes to allow notorious prisoners out of Azkaban. Amelia Bones replaces Fudge as Minister’.

Hermione did not quite understand why Harry was so pleased about Fudge being arrested but she knew that Harry must have a good reason. As she read out the remainder of the story Harry told her that Fudge was a little crazy and he believed that Dumbledore was raising an army of pupils to overthrow his government. Harry’s birthday party went well, everyone who had been invited turned up, all bearing gifts and cards. Harry had a great time opening all the gifts. Ginny gave him a magical quill case that would hold up to twelve quills of any length. Neville gave him a new Gryffindor Quidditch cloak.

Harry left Hermione’s present until the last, he opened the small box she had given him, inside he found a signet ring with a new Potter, Gryffindor, Granger coat of arms on it. She then passed him an extra parcel that contained a framed certificate and a plaque denoting the amalgamation of the Potter, Gryffindor, and Granger coat of arms.

Harry studied the shield on the plaque, a rampant Lion was on the right hand side with a Griffin on the left, three white roses, one in the middle at the top and two at the bottom one under each animal, all on a black background, a white band ran across the middle and it was all topped by a golden dukes crown sitting on the top of the shield. Amazed at the fact that they now had their own coat of arms Harry gave Hermione a kiss, followed by the inevitable comments of all his friends.

The rest of the party was filled with fun and games, many of the games were new to all the magical guests as they were Muggle games. Lots of laughter filled the Granger house until late in the evening when the guests began to leave. Harry thanked each one of them for coming and feeling a little brave he hugged all the girls as they left, the boys he either shook their hands or gave them a friendly pat on the shoulder.

The three friends went to bed that night feeling tired but happy, and they were all looking forward to going to the Burrow in the morning. Harry and Hermione bid Ginny a good night as she went into the guest room and they went into their bedroom.

“I think I shall sleep like a log tonight,” Harry said as he pulled his shirt off.

“Me too,” Hermione commented as she too undressed.

They were both fast asleep within minutes of kissing goodnight. Tomorrow they would be travelling to the Burrow but for tonight they all slept soundly.

## Chapter Sixteen

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### The Diary and the Basilisk

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The stay at the Burrow with the Weasley family although he found it very enjoyable seemed to be flying by really fast for Harry, and before he realised it the day for their visit to Diagon Alley to collect their school books for the coming year had arrived.

Harry knew what was coming as he stepped into the fireplace of the Burrow and said loudly and very clearly Diagon Alley, he really didn't want to go through it all again, but it was something he had to do, whether he liked it or not.

As they entered Flourish and Blotts book shop, he saw instantly that things were just as they had been before. Crowds of women were squeezed into the shop, all of them were there to see one of his least favourite people who was there doing a book signing. Harry had no choice but to allow things to happen exactly as they had done before up to a point.

Gilderoy Lockhart saw Harry almost immediately and dragged him forward to have his photo taken with the fraudster, then having been given the complete works of Lockhart Harry made his way through the crowd and rejoined the Weasleys he gave the new books to Ginny just as he had done before. Harry watched as everything unfolded just as he expected, then placing himself in just the right place he waited for the few minutes it would take before he made his move.

Having grabbed a book from Ginny's cauldron Lucius Malfoy spoke about how poor the Weasleys were. Having insulted Arthur and been in a scuffle he then reached forward with Ginny's book in his hand. He was just about to drop it into her cauldron when Harry made his move, he petrified Malfoy before he could complete the move that would place Tom Riddle's Horcrux containing diary in with Ginny's other books.

Harry then created a shield around the small area of the shop to prevent anyone getting close, "Mr Weasley sir," Harry called not taking his eyes from Malfoy.

Arthur Weasley stepped forward, "Yes Harry?" he said as he stood along side the young wizard.

"If you could send for an Auror, we have the item we talked about. We can also charge Lucius Malfoy with the attempted murder of Ginny, and plotting the death of students of Hogwarts."

Before Arthur could react to what Harry had just told him they were joined by one of the Auror's who had been doing crowd control at the door to the shop. He wanted to know what was going on, who had been fighting, and why was Mr Malfoy petrified.

"Mr Weasley sir, if you and the officer can take that book from Lucius and check it out I think you might find there is more than just the book he took from Ginny's cauldron." Harry told Arthur.

Arthur watched closely by the Auror, did as Harry said. Held beneath the book Lucius had taken from Ginny was the diary of Tom Riddle, just as Harry had expected. Arthur and the Auror examined the book, when they found it had nothing but blank pages they looked at Harry for some kind of explanation.

"You need to test it for dark magic, and then we need to talk to Madam Bones," Harry said as he freed Malfoy from his petrifying spell. As Malfoy tried to shout and protest Harry placed another spell placing handcuffs and manacles on Malfoy, he also cast a silencing spell on the evil blond haired death eater. Now all he had to do was to get in to see the Minister and to convince her of what he knew to be the truth. Hermione and Ginny wanted to know what was happening. Hermione questioned him and was not at all surprised when Harry told her he had found another Horcrux.

The Auror was not happy about what was happening, he was even more annoyed when both Harry and Mr Weasley refused to tell him anything. Arthur tried to use his position in the ministry to get the

Auror to arrest Malfoy and take them to see Madam Bones, but he was having none of it, he wanted explanations first before he did anything.

Unseen by Harry or the others Percy, the one Weasley Harry did not like very much, slipped out of the book shop and rushed across the road into a small sweetshop, he asked if he could use their floo connection, it did not take him long to find and tell Dumbledore what was happening, though he had not heard all of what was being said by Harry, he had heard enough to know that Harry and his father needed some help.

It took Dumbledore five minutes to reach Flourish and Blotts where he found Harry and Arthur still arguing with the Auror. Harry was refusing to allow Malfoy to speak. A few words from Dumbledore were enough for the Auror to agree to take them all in to see his superior.

It took nearly an hour for them to finally get to see the minister. An hour in which Harry repeatedly refused to remove the shackles and silencing charm from Malfoy, every one from the ministry who tried to remove them failed, and Harry thought it was this more than anything else that had got them into the minister's office.

Harry stood with Arthur, Dumbledore, and Hermione, in front of the minister's desk. Dumbledore placed a charm around Malfoy to prevent him from hearing anything they said before he turned to Amelia Bones.

"Harry has found another one of the items we discussed," Dumbledore told her quietly.

Madam Bones dismissed the Aurors who had escorted her visitors into the office. As soon as they had left she turned to Dumbledore "Another Horcrux Albus, just how many are there?" she asked.

Harry was the one who answered "Just this one and maybe one more."

"How do we know it's a Horcrux?" she wanted to know.

"Are you are familiar with Voldemort's real name?" Harry asked as he took the diary from Arthur.

Dumbledore answered the question "As Amelia is a member of an organisation I happen to lead, I have kept the minister informed about all that we have done, but I myself would like to know about this one, how do we know that the book is a Horcrux?"

Harry was suddenly struck with a problem, in his desire to save his friend from her former fate he had forgotten all about the Basilisk. He was trying to work out the best way to tell them about how the book was intended to be used. All he could think was that a small demonstration would be required; he knew he could not ask an adult because he was convinced that the sixteen year old Riddle would not risk not being able to control a fully qualified witch or wizard.

Finally having come to the conclusion that there was only one way to do it he turned to Hermione, after he had carefully explained what was needed and what might happen he asked if she felt strong enough to help him.

Hermione nodded her head then taking the book she sat down at the desk and borrowing a quill from the minister she began to write in the diary.

'Dear diary, my name is Hermione Jane Potter, I am twelve years old, I am a student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.'

Harry made her stop then and moved her away from the book, a few seconds later Hermione's words vanished and were replaced by words from an unseen hand,

'Hello Hermione, my name is Tom Riddle'

Harry picked up the quill and wrote 'Hello Tom, this time you failed.'

Harry's words vanished just as Hermione's had; they were replaced by more from Riddle 'I'm afraid I don't understand'

When Hermione went to pick up the quill again Harry stopped her "No more love, that's how he possesses people. Malfoy intended to give the book to Ginny so that Riddle could posses her then set free a monster. I believe it is a Basilisk, just as he did fifty years ago, Riddle would have drained Ginny's life force from her enabling him to create a new body for himself, not only would Ginny have died but so would several Muggle born students at Hogwarts. Riddle was the one who released the monster fifty years ago not Hagrid who was accused by Riddle."

"How do you know that there is a Basilisk at Hogwarts?" Madam Bones asked not sounding convinced.

"Harry is the heir to Gryffindor Amelia, the castle has revealed several things to him in the past year, it was how we managed to catch Peter Pettigrew and Quirrell," Dumbledore told her.

"So Mr Potter, I suppose you will destroy this as you did all the others, that leaves us with just one problem, how do we dispose of a Basilisk that no one has seen?" Minister Bones asked.

"Well I know where it is, I just have to enter the chamber of secrets and I do have Gryffindor's sword," Harry answered not sounding to convincing.

'Harry James Potter, you are not going chasing after a Basilisk' Hermione told him in no uncertain terms.

'Well someone has to kill the darn thing, and I think I'm the only one who could do it' he replied still not sounding very convincing.

'What on earth makes you think you can kill one? you obviously know what they are capable of' Hermione said sounding both frightened and annoyed.

'Hermione I have to do this, I don't know why the fates chose me, I don't really care. I just want to get it all over and done with so that you and I can live a normal life' Harry answered her quietly.

‘A normal life, you and me, now that could never be’ Hermione said with a small giggle that made everyone look at her.

Madam Bones stood and rang a small bell then turned to Dumbledore, “Albus I suggest that we leave for Hogwarts. I take it that is where the sword is kept, when we get there Mr Potter can do what ever has to be done with this book then I shall send a detail of Auror’s to rid us of this monster,” she said decisively.

Dumbledore agreed with her before almost ordering Arthur to take Ginny and Hermione back to the Burrow. Harry thought Hermione was going to explode when she heard Dumbledore, “Excusssse Meee Sirrrr,” she said as she rounded on Albus Dumbledore just as she had on their first day at Hogwarts.

Dumbledore realised instantly that he had made a mistake, “Arthur, just take your family home, Mrs Potter will be accompanying us to Hogwarts.”

Arthur Horrified by all he had heard left the office and joined his family in the Atrium of the ministry building, he began to explain all that was going on to Molly as they walked to a large fireplace, the whole Weasley family were gone from the building just two minutes later.

The minister organised a detail of people to accompany them back to the castle, and after several minutes they too left the building, arriving outside the School gates just seconds later.

Actually destroying the book was a lot more difficult than Harry or Dumbledore had expected, the sword of Gryffindor only kept bouncing off what ever protection that Riddle had placed on it. It was Madam Bones who eventually came up with the idea that maybe the younger version of Voldemort had put most of his magic into preventing the book from being destroyed by things that a teenager would consider dangerous, like fire, knife, or sword, it would only be later as he grew older that he would have discarded these methods in favour of more devious magical things.

Harry recalled how easy it had been to destroy the book and Riddle with the Basilisk fang and he knew he would need to do the same thing all over again.

An hour later Harry entered the girls' washroom on the second floor. Dumbledore the minister and her Aurors waited outside the door with Hermione. Harry had insisted that they all allow him to enter alone, "I don't want anyone to know how to get into the chamber. I will open it then I will call you in," he had insisted, they had all very reluctantly agreed with him after a fierce argument.

Once the entrance to the chamber was opened Harry stood aside as Dumbledore the sword of Gryffindor in one hand and a cockerel in the other led a detail of five Aurors down into the depths of the castle.

Five minutes later Harry heard a dreaded sound behind him, without wasting a second he ushered Hermione and the minister into the girls washroom, Madam Bones was a little annoyed at being grabbed and shoved on her backside by a school boy and began to protest. Harry cast a silencing charm on her until he had closed the door then he placed his finger over his lips to let her know she should keep quiet, lifting the charm when she nodded her head.

"The dam thing has got past them," he whispered to them as he heard again the voice of the Basilisk.

'Blood, need blood' it hissed as it left the safety of the drainage pipes. Harry knew it was coming their way; it had smelt their blood and was approaching them swiftly. He wondered what to do. Albus had the sword somewhere deep below them, he knew that the huge snake was almost impervious to magic so his power to stop the creature was practically nil.

Hermione heard the voice of the Basilisk through her connection to Harry; she could hear Harry's frantic thoughts on how to protect her from the peril that even then was entering the second floor corridor where they were.

The three of them stood in silence as they heard the snake slither to a stop out side the door. Harry for the first time in this life was

beginning to panic, he had absolutely no idea of what to do. Hermione placed a shield against the door but Harry knew the snake would simply find another way into the room.

The door to the room rattled and shook as the huge snake attempted to break it down, Hermione squealed and called out for help, maybe Dumbledore would hear her she thought. Her call for help was followed by a tremendous blow to the door, followed by the walls around them shaking; they heard a low rumble that quickly turned into a huge crashing sound in the corridor out side.

After a few seconds of silence Harry realised he could no longer hear the Basilisk. Carefully and quietly he removed the shield spell from the door and opening the door just a crack he peered out, there in the corridor right out side lay the body of the huge snake; it shuddered a few times in its death throws before becoming still. Harry opened the door wider hoping that the snakes head was facing away from him, even in death the stare of a Basilisk could kill.

The sight that met his eyes made his stomach turn over, there was blood splattered all over the corridor, running down the walls and dripping from the ceiling, the huge head of the snake had been totally crushed by two huge pieces of stone that had fallen from the ceiling above. Harry wasn't sure if the snake had brought about its own death as it tried to crash through the door or if the actual castle itself had answered Hermione's call for help, he did how ever have his suspicions.

The sudden thought that the fangs of the beast might have been destroyed suddenly entered his mind and he rushed around the larger of the two stones, there at his feet lay one broken fang, it was almost identical to the fang he had used before. Picking it up much more carefully this time than he had done in his other encounter with the Basilisk, Harry called the two women from the toilet telling them to be prepared for a rather unpleasant sight.

The sight of all the blood made Hermione feel ill, she rushed back into the wash room and was still there rinsing her face when Dumbledore and the Aurors emerged from the entrance to the chamber of secrets.

Hermione simply pointed at the door when Albus looked at her for some sort of explanation. Dumbledore and the Auror's rushed out in to the corridor where they were confronted by the gruesome sight. Harry was just about to stab the diary with the Basilisk fang as Dumbledore burst from the wash room. The screams that came from the book as the fang sank into it were accompanied by the ghostly form of Tom Riddle who was writhing in agony, seconds later as Riddle vanished a silence that could almost be heard fell on all of them as they stared at the book that was bleeding ink that mingled with the Basilisk blood.

Harry breathed a sigh of relief, he had just one more thing to do with the evil diary but that would wait, for now he wanted to be with Hermione, and go to the kitchens for a cup of tea.

## Chapter Seventeen

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### Dobby

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Harry sat in the Hogwarts kitchens with Hermione, he was feeling just a little scared of what he had to tell her and had absolutely no idea how to go about it, 'How do I tell her that I am the last Horcrux' he wondered as an Elf brought them a steaming mug of freshly made tea. Seeing the elf gave Harry an idea, something else he could focus on for now, 'Free Dobby, that's what I need to do next' he told himself cheering up a little.

Harry was about to tell Hermione how he wanted to set an elf free, but stopped himself when the word spew entered his mind. How was he to get Hermione to help without getting her all fired up so that she would once again start to knit silly woollen hats. This he decided would take a little more thought and planning before he said anything to her, he would need to think and tread carefully, very carefully.

Hermione though had other ideas, she had picked up his thoughts about Dobby 'Ok Harry, what ever it is you might as well tell me now' she told him as she finished her tea.

Harry sighed a little; he obviously had not been thinking carefully enough, he told himself as he finished the last of his tea before telling Hermione how he had decided that he wanted to set the Malfoy elf free.

'Set their elf free, what elf?'

"Well you might not know this but most of the old magical families have house elves, the elves in some families are mistreated because the families don't understand that they have feelings just like we do. I saw Malfoy kick his elf for no obvious reason, besides I feel sorry for any creature that has to live with such an evil family, so I think I should try to help the little guy," Harry told his astonished wife.

‘There,’ Harry thought ‘and without mentioning that they are mostly just slaves’. “Come on if we are quick we can get to the ministry before Malfoy gets sent to prison and Mrs Malfoy and Draco go home.”

‘Harry love, we can’t apparate inside Hogwarts, and someone might notice if we just walk down to the main gate and vanish into thin air, don’t you think’ Hermione thought as her husband wrapped his arms around her.

Harry watched as the elves around them prepared lunch for the professors that lived at the school all year long. He was wondering how they could get to Diagon Alley without giving away the secret that they could both disapparate, the idea came to him as he thought of how his little friend Dobby had saved their lives during the other war on Voldemort.

“I’ve got an idea,” he suddenly said as he called the kitchen elves to him.

“As I am the true heir to Gryffindor, I need some help, I need to ask a favour, is anyone here willing to take me to Diagon Alley?” he asked as the elves gathered around him.

Several seconds ticked by and Harry was just about to give up on the idea of using elf magic to get him to London when an elderly female elf stepped forward, “I will take the master to Diagon Alley sir,” she said in a squeaky little voice.

“Good, Hermione love you wait here, I won’t be long I have to fetch something,” Harry said as he rushed from the kitchen.

Hermione along with several of the elves stood and watched in surprise when he took off at a run, he was out of the kitchen before she had a chance to say anything.

“Would the Mistress like another cup of tea,” an elf asked her as she stared at the door Harry had just rushed through.

“Why on earth did you just call me mistress?” a surprised Hermione asked the elf.

“Master Harry is the master of Hogwarts, and you mistress are Master Harry’s lady,” the elf answered.

“Master of Hogwarts, exactly what do you mean?” she asked.

“You and Master Harry own Hogwarts mistress,” the elf replied looking at her as though Hermione was simple.

“Own Hogwarts? We don’t own it... do we?” she said in surprise.

“Yes mistress, Master Harry is heir to the great Gryffindor,” the elf said before he turned and went back to his cooking.

‘We own Hogwarts’ she thought ‘I think I might just take a walk up to the library and see what I can find out about just what that means’ she told Harry who had just reached Dumbledore’s office.

‘You could do that while I’m in London’ Harry answered as he waited for the headmaster to answer his knock.

‘Harry Potter, if you think for one minute that you are going swanning off to London with out me you are sadly mistaken’ she said with a small chuckle.

Harry was back in the kitchen five minutes later, five minutes after that he and Hermione approached the minister’s office, the minister’s assistant refused to allow them to enter saying that the minister was busy talking to Mrs Malfoy. Harry and Hermione took a seat and waited, they did not have to wait for to long before a rather bad tempered Mrs Malfoy came storming from the office.

“Mrs Malfoy,” Harry said as she made to pass them.

Turning to look at him Mrs Malfoy sneered, “Harry Potter, here to gloat I suppose?”

“No just here to return your husbands property,” Harry answered politely as he handed her a small bundle; it was the Riddle diary which he had placed inside a dirty smelly old sock, Harry forced the bundle into her hand.

With a look of total disgust Mrs Malfoy stared at the filthy sock, then with a shudder she called “Dobby.”

Dobby appeared shaking and looking terrified, he bowed till his nose touched the floor, Mrs Malfoy thrust the bundle at him, “Here take this,” she said her nose wrinkling up at the smell.

She then whirled around and walked out of the door; Harry grabbed the little elf by the shoulder and stopped him following her.

“You should open it, take out the book,” Harry said smiling at Dobby.

Dobby did as Harry told him then stared at the book in one hand and the smelly sock in his other.

“Clothes,” Harry said grinning “a sock to be accurate,” he added.

Seconds later Draco Malfoy entered the room “Dobby! come on you bone idle piece of scum,” he shouted at the little elf.

Dobby held up the dirty old sock tears in his eyes “Mistress set Dobby free.”

“What the hell are you on about now you stupid thing?” Draco asked staring at the elf.

“Mistress gave Dobby clothes,” he replied waving the sock in Draco’s face “Dobby is free.”

“Looks like you and your mother will have to do your own work from now on,” Harry said to Malfoy a huge grin on his face.

Realising what Harry had done Malfoy turned on him. “I... I- you can’t do that Potter, you wont get away with it,” Draco shouted angrily.

“I think I just did,” Harry said then he started to laugh, “Dobby how would you like a nice clean job to do, we would have to pay you I’m afraid but I can guarantee it will be better than being their punch bag,” he said looking into the huge tear filled eyes of Dobby.

Draco stormed out of the room looking even more disgusted than his mother had. Dobby kept looking at the sock in one hand the book in his other and then at Harry, it did not take him long to work out that Harry had tricked Mrs Malfoy into setting him free.

Hermione stood back and watched as all this unfolded, and as Draco stormed out of the door she turned to Dobby who was about to put the dirty sock on his foot.

“Dobby, I like that name, now Dobby you are going to need some clean clothes if you are going to be free and getting a new job,” Hermione said as she did a quick cleaning spell on the sock.

Harry had rubbed his sock in the blood of the basilisk as well as several other rather unpleasant places, and she did not think it a good idea for the little elf to turn up for what ever job Harry had in mind, smelling awful and dressed in the filthy toga like piece of rag that hung from his shoulders looking ready to fall apart.

“We should get him some clothes, don’t you think?” Hermione said looking at Harry.

“Good idea sweetheart,” Harry answered before talking to his little friend. “Dobby would you allow me to buy you some new clothes?” he asked.

Dobby looked a little puzzled, the clothes he wore he had had as long as he could remember, “Why would Harry Potter sir want to buy clothes for Dobby?” he asked.

“Well its my fault you are free and you have to earn a living now, so wearing something with the Malfoy crest on is not a good idea. You will also need to look clean to get a job, and on top of that as my friend I would deem it an honour to buy you a gift,” Harry said hoping the little fellow would not be offended.

After shedding some tears and declaring how great a wizard Harry was Dobby finally agreed to allow Harry to buy him some clothes. Hermione took them to the children's clothes shop near to Flourish and Blotts where they bought Dobby a white shirt, blue jeans, and a Gryffindor red jumper. Hermione would have bought even more but the little elf insisted he had more than enough and that as soon as he had earned enough he would pay her back and then buy his own clothes.

Dobby looked a different creature as Harry and Hermione apparated to Grimmauld place with him. While Hermione went to knock on the door of number twelve, Harry told Dobby what they wanted him to do. Sirius was surprised to have his children home unexpectedly, especially when Hermione said that she and Harry had a house elf and would be paying the elf wages. Dobby was invited in to the kitchen by Sirius, when Dobby heard Kreacher insult Hermione he jumped on the elderly Kreacher and began hitting him over and over while yelling "You's is a bad elf."

The negotiating wages with the little elf was rather difficult. Dobby insisted he receive only one galleon a month with no time off, and Hermione insisting he be paid five with every Sunday off, after nearly an hour they finally worked out a compromise. Dobby would get his one galleon a month plus he would take one Sunday a month off, he would be allowed to eat and drink as much as he wished and he could have the old broom shed out in the back garden as his own place to do with as he wished.

Once everything was settled Hermione took Dobby out to the broom shed, she offered to help him to clean it but Dobby refused her help, with tears once more in his eye's Dobby said "Harry Potter sir's lady Hem-I-on-ee is a great witch, Dobby is highly very proud to be treated as her friend."

Hermione smiled as Dobby set about cleaning the shed and then creating a bed for himself, he banished all the spiders and mice before returning to work in the kitchen with the miserable Kreacher.

“I like him Harry,” Hermione said with a huge feeling of satisfaction “I think we made a good friend there.”

Harry agreed, he knew he had a life long friend in the little house elf. He had thought of one more thing to do before he told anyone his worries about being a Horcrux himself but that could wait. They had just two days left of their holiday and Harry decided that he would leave Hermione with plenty of that time to spend with Ginny. What he had to do would wait until they were back a school.

Walking into the living room of the Burrow Harry suddenly found himself almost assaulted by the fiery haired best friend of himself and Hermione, as she flung herself at him and gave him a Weasley hug, “Mum just told me what you did to Mr Malfoy Harry,” Ginny said as she hugged him tight “thanks for saving my life.”

Hermione watched and chuckled “That’s my Harry.”

It was as they climbed into bed that night that Hermione suddenly thought that maybe they should have gone back to Hogwarts, the headmaster would no doubt be wondering where they were. Harry told her not to worry “It is after all to late to worry now,” he said as they settled into each others arms for the night.

## Chapter Eighteen

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### Gilderoy Lockhart

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The train ride to Hogwarts had been uneventful, Ginny joined Harry, Hermione, and Neville in the compartment they had chosen, they were only ten minutes into the journey when Harry noticed how well Ginny and Neville were getting along together, they were chatting like old friends, and it made him smile to know that this time Ginny's personality would not change.

Hermione spent most of the journey sat in Harry's lap, several times when they kissed Hermione found her two rather large front teeth were some what annoying, she realised that she was always being just a little cautious with her smile and a little self conscious of their size, by the time they had reached the half way point she had decided she should do something about her problem teeth. She knew her mum and dad did not want her to use magical methods to have them corrected but she also now knew that as a married woman she was no longer their responsibility, that position was now held by her husband.

Once her mind was made up Hermione settled more into Harry's lap then resting her head on his chest she fell asleep. She was woken up by Harry as the train began to slow down 'We should get changed into our robes' he told her as she rubbed the sleep from her eyes.

The trip from the train station to Hogwarts was a new experience for Hermione as she climbed aboard one of the horseless carriages, she paused in the door way and watched as Harry stroked some invisible animal, whispering to it as he did so.

'What is it pulling the carriage, Harry?' she asked when he joined her on the back seat of the carriage.

‘They are called Thestrals, you can only see them if you have witnessed someone die’ Harry answered quietly.

‘Oh Harry, you saw your mum die’ Hermione said wishing she had kept her thoughts to herself.

Harry simply nodded then put his head back his eyes closed, ‘We should be there soon, I wonder how Ginny is doing on the boats’ he thought as the carriage trundled on toward the school. After the sorting Harry watched as Dumbledore introduced their new Defence against the dark arts teacher, Professor Gilderoy Lockhart. “He’s just a fraud, and a liar,” Harry told Hermione as they watched the girls all around them clapping vigorously “he hasn’t done a single thing he writes about in those books.”

The sorting soon began and after the usual song from the hat Ginny, who was one of the last to be sorted, was sorted into Gryffindor, just as Harry knew she would be, she joined them at the Gryffindor table ignoring Ron when he beckoned her to join him.

The rest of the headmasters welcoming speech was as usual all about the things that the students should not do and the rather long list of banned items on Mr Filch’s special list. After the feast was finished and the plates had all vanished Ginny and Hermione carried on chatting ignoring the call of the prefect for the first years to follow him, instead Ginny stayed with Harry, Neville, and Hermione discussing what to expect the following day among other Hogwarts related things.

“This place is so much better than I imagined,” Ginny said as she stared at the magical ceiling.

“Yeah I know, it doesn’t matter how well someone describes this place to you the reality is always so much different,” Harry answered.

“I kept getting lost last year, spent half my time walking along the wrong corridors,” Neville said grinning.

"Harry, take Ginny up to the common room with you, I have something I need to do," Hermione told him as they got up to leave the great hall.

Harry stared as Hermione rushed off ahead of them "Wonder what that is all about?" he wondered out loud as he and Ginny walked with Neville to the main stair case.

Ginny shrugged "She never said anything at dinner."

Harry studied Ginny's face as she marvelled at the sights while they made their way up to the Gryffindor common room; her eyes were darting about as though she was trying to take in everything all at once.

"You do know Gin, we have several years to get to see all these things," Harry said gesturing at the castle around them.

"Oh I know Harry, but I am so excited, I've been dreaming of this day for years and I don't want to miss a thing," she replied excitedly.

Harry suddenly felt happy and proud that he had been able to save her from Voldemort, she was his best friend after Hermione and he was happy that she was so happy. Up in the common room Harry and Ginny joined her brothers Fred and George. "Hey guys, how would you two like to help me out with a sort of prank?" Harry asked as they huddled together near the fire.

Both Fred and George were intrigued by Harry's plot and promised that they would work on making what he asked them for.

"We could make it in to a biscuit or something," Fred said

"Yeah or maybe a sweet," George enthused.

"Or you could make it into a powder or potion that we could add to anything," Ginny added enjoying finally being in on one of her brothers many plots. The Weasley twins excited that they already had a plot brewing on their very first day back at school left Harry and Ginny and disappeared out of the portrait hole.

Harry and Ginny were joined by Neville then Hermione who decided she should show Ginny up to the first year girl's dorm, then that done they could all go up to their quarters and have a nice quiet cup of tea. Harry told Hermione and Ginny all about what he wanted to do, and why. Ginny could not believe what he told her, while Hermione though she did not want to believe it knew that Harry must be telling the truth, though she was baffled by how he always managed to find these things out so quick.

As the girls stood to go up to the dorm Harry noticed something different about his wife, "Hermione Potter you had your teeth altered," he exclaimed

Hermione looked at him a little nervously "You don't mind do you Harry?"

"No love, they look a little better, just surprised me is all," he answered.

"I felt a little self conscious about them so I asked Madam Pomfrey to help," Hermione said smiling at him.

"I hope it wasn't me making you feel that way," Harry blurted out, "because I would love you even if you had no teeth"

"Geese Harry, no teeth, that's gross," Ginny said before giggling.

Hermione leaned down and gave him a quick kiss "It wasn't you love, and thanks," she said before going up the girls stairway with Ginny.

By the time their first defence period came around on Thursday afternoon Harry and Hermione had heard the stories and rumours about the new defence teacher. Ginny had said she could learn more from a chocolate frog card than she had learned in her first double defence lesson.

Harry decided he should do something about things himself as it seemed Dumbledore was ignoring all the stories about Lockhart, even those from his professors. Wondering what to do Harry almost

took a wrong turn on his way to the classroom until the castle blocked his way, without thinking he thanked the castle and resumed his walk to the defence class, that was when the idea struck him. He had once told Snape that he could close down the castle to him and he knew that he actually could have done it had he asked.

Hermione joined him as he turned on to the corridor leading to the class room of the defence teacher, "What are you looking so pleased about sweetheart?" she asked seeing the huge smile on his face and feeling the satisfaction he was feeling.

"Well you know how everyone has been complaining about Lockhart, I just asked the castle to keep the fraud from finding the classroom," Harry chuckled.

For two hours Gilderoy Lockhart wandered up and down the same two corridors. It seemed no matter which way he walked or how many flights of stairs he climbed he kept arriving back at the teachers staff room. He was almost pulling out his blond hair by the time he heard the final bell of the day announcing the end of lessons.

As the last bell rang Hermione reminded Harry about their missing teacher, "We don't want the professor starving Harry, I think you should let him find his way around now."

Harry did as she asked and laughed as they made their way up to their quarters "I wonder what happened to him?"

"You mean you don't know?" Hermione said also laughing.

"No, well all I did was ask the castle to stop him finding his way to the classroom, and that worked," Harry answered her with a huge grin.

Gilderoy Lockhart looked extremely flustered when he entered the great hall for dinner, the look of relief on his face when he saw that he was actually where he wanted to be made Hermione chuckle, Harry who had been talking to Neville turned to look at what it was that had made her laugh, he too saw the look on Lockhart's face and he could not help making a comment as the professor passed them.

“Did you forget our class this afternoon sir, or did you just get lost in this huge castle?”

Harry’s comment was met with a burst of laughter from the second years who heard, they all began to clap and shout out congratulations on finding the great hall. Lockhart’s face turned red and he rushed up to the teachers table joining the rest of the professor’s.

Sunday evening as Harry and Ginny played a game of exploding snap watched by Hermione, they were interrupted by the Weasley twins who sat down with them.

“We did it,” George announced with pride.

“Yeah we borrowed some Veritaserum from Snapes study and based it on that,” Fred whispered.

“We also figured a sure way to make certain the prat will use it,” George said holding up a bottle.

Harry looked at the bottle that George held, it looked to Harry just like any other bottle of shampoo, he looked a little sceptically at the twins,

“Shampoo, you think washing his hair will work?”

“It will if we replace his normal shampoo with this one,” Fred chuckled wickedly, “all you have to do is get into his bathroom.”

“I can do that,” Harry boasted sticking his chest out, “it should be easy.”

Hermione rolled her eyes at him ‘How do you propose to do that then Harry?’

‘Have you forgotten we don’t need any passwords to open any door in the castle, all we have to do is get the grinning git out of his quarters for a while. Then I slip in and swap bottles, should be easy don’t you think?’ he answered watching her roll her eyes again.

“How long do the effects last?” Harry asked the twins.

“Not sure, it would depend on how much he uses,” George answered.

“Yes we only used a tiny drop and it lasted nearly all day,” Fred added.

“We have him for double defence on Tuesday,” Ginny offered “we could do it while he is in class.”

“I have an idea that might work,” Hermione said before she jumped up and left them watching her leave the common room.

“Does she always do that?” George asked as they watched her leave through the portrait hole.

“Usually it happens when she is studying,” Harry grinned.

Ten minutes passed before Hermione returned with Collin Creevey, they sat down with the group while Hermione explained her plan.

Fifteen minutes later Ginny Weasley knocked on the door of Professor Lockhart’s quarters. As soon as Lockhart opened the door Ginny passed him a piece of parchment.

“Who sent this?” he asked as she turned to leave.

“One of the boys sir, I don’t know his name, I’m only a first year,” Ginny said straight faced.

Lockhart shrugged then opened the note and read the content, ‘Mr Harry Potter wonders if you would be willing to join him in the great hall for some photographs, thank you’ was all the note said. Lockhart in his vanity gave no thought to the fact that the note was not signed or that it was Sunday evening, after a quick admiring look at him self in his mirror Gilderoy Lockhart closed the door to his rooms and made his way down to the great hall.

Collin Creevey took several pictures of Harry and Lockhart, making sure that he spent quite some time getting the poses correct just as Harry had asked, they just forgot to tell the smiling Professor there

was no film in the camera. While Lockhart was busy having his photo's done Hermione entered his rooms with no problems, she soon found his bathroom and after a very short search she replaced the shampoo in Lockhart's bottle, she left no trace of having been there when she left and made her way down to the great hall.

Harry saw Hermione waiting outside in the entrance hall as she thought 'mission accomplished'

He gave Collin a wink and chuckled as Collin declared he had enough photos to be going on with.

Gilderoy Lockhart spent the next day telling everyone, and anyone how he had been so clever gathering all the information needed from the witches and wizards who had performed the magical fetes in his books. How once he had enough information he had used a memory charm, the only charm he could actually do properly, to wipe their memories before writing it all down as his own work. He was furious with him self but just could not resist the urge to boast; no matter how hard he tried he just could not stop.

At lunch time he tried to remain in his room, but the urge to have a large audience won out and he found him self in the great hall. Half way through the meal he stood and called for attention before telling every one present all about how he had written all his works, several times he tried to stop himself but even holding his hand over his mouth did nothing to stop him repeating the story.

Dumbledore was furious with the fraudulent teacher and actually sent for Aurors to arrest Lockhart for illegal use of the memory charm. Lockhart eagerly admitted it all when he was questioned by this new audience; the last that Harry saw of him was when he was ushered from the great hall by two of the wizarding world's law officers.

Harry made a comment to Hermione wondering about who would be the new defence teacher, she suggested that Sirius might make a good professor. Harry laughed as he thought of the competition that would arise between Sirius and the Weasley twins.

Though none of those involved in the exposure of Lockhart said a word about it to anyone, the renowned Hogwarts rumour machine had named the culprits even before Lockhart was lead away, congratulations from dozens of the students were given to Fred and George on their excellent work, even some of the Slytherins voiced their admiration for the Twins.

Even Dumbledore congratulated them on their abilities, then with a small smile on his lips and a nod to Harry he left to go to his quarters.

## Chapter 19.

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### Snape, Pranks and Potions.

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Albus Dumbledore paced his office, he was so angry he felt he almost had steam coming from his ears, forty-five minutes ago he had sent for professor Snape and he had not arrived yet. 'NEVER in all my time as headmaster has anyone kept me waiting so long, I've a mind to fire him, how DARE he keep me waiting so long' he thought as he turned once again on the spot near to the window.

Meanwhile down in the corridor well hidden from view and across the corridor from the gargoyle that stood guard over the entrance to the heads office, three boys, one with jet black hair, and two with fiery red hair, were crushed together under an invisibility cloak. They were laughing so hard they had tears running down their cheeks and pains in their ribs, their laughter was totally silent due to the silencing charm Harry had placed over them when Snape had arrived.

Professor Severus Snape stamped his feet and waved his wand about and yelled at the stairway like a petulant child in frustration, he was trapped on the moving spiral stair case that led to the head masters study, if he tried to go up, the stairs would go down, if he tried to go down, the stairs would go up, if he changed his speed so did the moving staircase, with sweat dripping from almost every pore Severus was almost in tears, he wasn't sure if they were tears of anger or of frustration or both, for forty minutes he had been stuck half way up, or was he half way down, he was so flustered by it all he could no longer remember.

Finally when Harry could take no more laughter he cancelled the spell that had trapped the potions teacher for so long, 'Explain that to Dumbledore' he thought as Snape was suddenly able to make some progress, gingerly at first Severus stepped on to the next step up, then the next as the stairs slowly took him upward.

Harry tapped the Weasley twins on their shoulder and with a nod of his head he indicated it was time to go back to the common room. Two corridors away Harry removed the cloak and the silencing charm from himself and the twins. "I wish Hermione and Ginny, could have been here to see that," he said between fits of laughter.

"Did you see the tantrum he had, I remember Ginny doing some thing like that when she was five and mum wouldn't let her have a go on a new broom," Fred gasped out holding his ribs.

"All that sweating he was doing, I wonder if he will risk taking a shower, or do you think he might be scared of getting his hair wet?" George asked, he hadn't laughed so hard for a long time.

Harry had just entered the common room when Hermione locked eyes with him, for some reason she had tear stains on her cheeks, cheeks that were bright red, panicking slightly he rushed forward and took her into his arms. "What's the matter love, have you been crying, has some one upset you?" he asked as he wrapped his arms tighter around her.

"No Harry, I'm I a little embarrassed but that's because I kept laughing out loud and nobody knew why," she replied touched by his concern.

"Ok what was making you laugh so much you have tear streaks?" Harry asked thinking he might already know.

"Remember when we first got together and I said if I concentrated I could see through your eyes, well the oddest thing happened. I was reading my charms book when suddenly I could see Snape trapped on the spiral stairs, I could feel you laughing and it was so funny I burst out laughing. I couldn't stop until you stopped, every one here thinks I've gone crazy. Ginny said she was going to fetch Madam Pomfrey," she explained

"Whoa, that must have felt weird," Harry exclaimed wondering if he would be able to see through Hermione's eyes.

"I think the bond is getting stronger," Hermione said getting serious "I could even smell the twins."

"I never noticed that they smelled," Harry said in reply

"No silly, their shampoo or what ever, actually it's rather nice," she said smiling.

Harry frowned, he had not noticed any change in the bond they shared, 'but then I haven't been sitting laughing for no apparent reason' he thought.

"We should go up to our quarters and check this out, see what might have altered," Hermione said as Harry thought about the implications of being able to see through her eyes without effort.

With Neville and Ginny following, Harry and Hermione walked up to their quarters, 'I think it's time we told these two about the effects of the bond we have,' Harry said as he opened the door to their rooms.

'Do you think we should, we haven't told anyone else' Hermione answered sounding unsure.

'Well we are with at least one of them nearly all the time, it might save us a few problems explaining things in the future, I mean what if Ginny had gone to fetch Pomfrey' Harry thought.

'Good point' Hermione said as she closed the door behind Neville.

"Okay what's going on?" Ginny asked before Harry or Hermione had figured a way to tell their best friends.

"I think you and Neville should sit down, we have some thing to tell you," Harry said looking serious.

Harry sat in a chair facing them and told them the details of their bond, how they could talk to each other and hear some but not all of each others thoughts, and now Hermione could see through his eyes, the two disbelieving faces of Ginny and Neville, their looks made Hermione chuckle.

"I think we could prove it easy enough, you go into the kitchen with Neville and I'll stay here with Ginny, then they can pick up something and we can tell each other what it is they hold up in front of us," she said as Harry finished talking.

So that's exactly what they did, Harry stood in the middle of the kitchen well out of sight of the living room and told Hermione every thing the Neville picked up, 'And now Nev has sat down at the table with a look of shock on his face,' Harry said before he walked back into the living room chuckling at his friend.

"Did you research it yet, this bond?" Neville asked Hermione as he entered the room from the kitchen.

Hermione's face turned a rather light shade of pink, getting redder by the second as she answered him "No, not yet,"

"Hermione Potter! I do not believe you," Neville exclaimed smiling "our very own book worm who researches just about everything under the sun, did not think of researching some thing so important to herself."

"Well it didn't seem... I mean it's important but it... I sort of just accepted it alright," Hermione said her face now a pretty crimson colour.

"I think Nev has a point, we should do some research but we should keep it to ourselves, what do you think Harry?" Ginny said giving Hermione a sympathetic look.

Harry shuffled his feet and looked down at his shoes, he felt guilty because he should have thought of that when things first changed, "I did read that book your mum showed us, but there was not much in it," he finally answered her.

"Mum knows?" Ginny said surprised.

"Yes that's why she made the shed in to a room for us, we have to be together more than normal people, we get weak and tired if we don't

have some physical contact through the day and we have to sleep together to be fully refreshed, well something like that," Hermione said in answer to Ginny's remark.

"That's why you got sulky for those first days at the Burrow. I thought it was my fault," Ginny said sounding a little relieved.

"Harry I think I'll go see if there are any books in the library that might help," Hermione said.

"I'll come with you," Ginny quipped.

"We'll go up to the room of requirement, see what we can come up with in there," Harry said pointing at Neville.

"The room of what?" Ginny asked sounding surprised.

"It's a room an elf told me about up on the seventh floor, he called it the come and go room, it becomes anything you want it to be," Harry answered getting disbelieving looks again.

"Maybe we should all go there together," Neville said getting up from his seat, "sounds like a good place to start; besides I would like to see this room that can come and go."

Together the four friends made their way along the seventh floor corridor to the portrait of Barnabus the Barmy. Five minutes later three of the four friends stood watching as Harry paced up and down in front of them, three times he re-trod his footsteps thinking of a room where they could get help understanding soul-mates and their bond.

Neville and Ginny gaped in surprise as a huge oak door appeared in front of them. Harry opened the door and gestured for them to follow, looking around they found themselves in a huge room, it was at least twice the size of the great hall. Starting at the end nearest the door there was an immensely large book case that was full of what looked like very old and rare books.

Harry couldn't help the smile that appeared on his face as he watched the joy in his wife's eyes upon seeing the collection of as yet unread books, it took Hermione no more than a couple of seconds before she had begun to read the spines of the old books. Wondering why the room was so vast Harry followed Ginny and Neville as they joined Hermione in choosing a book to read.

'Hermione love, how on earth do you manage to choose a book to read so quickly from all these?' Harry asked as Hermione sat down in a comfy looking armchair.

'I don't know how I do it love, I just seem to do it naturally' Hermione answered flipping open the book she had picked.

For over an hour and a half not a single word was spoken as the four friends read through books trying to find some thing that they could start with, Neville was the first to speak. "Blimey Hermione this one looks useful," he said as he passed the book he had been reading to her.

Hermione read through the page Neville had open, her eyes got wider as she read, she reread the page before turning to Harry, "Harry sweetheart, will you take a walk to the far end of the room for me,?" she asked as she turned the page and read a little further.

"Huh, walk all the way down there?" he asked looking at the wall at the far end of the room.

"Yes dear, be a sweet and hurry up," Hermione said her head still stuck in the book.

Harry shrugged his shoulders at Ginny and Neville who were watching him with smiles on their faces.

"It's not really that far," Ginny said holding her hand over her eyes and squinting as though she was trying to see some thing on the distant horizon.

Neville burst out laughing earning an odd look from Hermione, and Harry poked his tongue out at them both. Then he set off on his walk

to the far end of the huge room, having reached the end he called out that he was there. Hermione got up and carefully placed the book on her chair, turning around she stepped forward a few feet then closed her eyes and concentrated on Harry. Seconds later Harry vanished from the far end of the room and reappeared standing next to Hermione.

“Bloody hell! how did you do that?” Ginny and Neville chorused.

“Well it said in the book I could call my soul-mate to me once the bond is strong enough,” Hermione answered.

Harry stood staring a huge smile on his face “I walked all that way down there so you could fetch me back?”

“Well you can’t simply believe everything in a book, you have to test it,” Hermione said.

“Ok woman, who are you, and what did you do with my Hermione?” Harry said grinning.

“Well I learnt that from you and Lockhart,” Hermione huffed.

“So what else can you two do?” Ginny wanted to know.

“What I want to know is how did you do that, Hermione keeps telling us nobody can do that sort of thing inside Hogwarts,” Neville asked looking rather baffled.

“The bond magic seems stronger when we are surrounded by all the magic in Hogwarts, and it doesn’t seem to be affected in any other way by normal magic,” Harry told them as he started to read the book Hermione had put down.

There was a small cry and a bump, from behind him, Harry’s eyes shot to Hermione who had fallen over. Rushing to her aid he asked what had happened and if she was ok.

“I tried to read that book through your eyes and it made me dizzy, it felt weird seeing what you saw and still seeing from my own eyes, I

think next time I will try it sitting down," Hermione answered getting up from the floor with help from Harry.

Harry helped her back to her chair where she pulled from her bag some parchment and a quill; she began to write down the things that they knew about. They could hear each others thoughts, feel each others feelings, see through each others eyes, share their magic, and now they could call each other, bringing them together. Hermione was sure that there would be more that they could do, they just needed to study the books more.

It was around time for the evening meal when they all left the room and made their way down to the great hall to eat. That night both Harry and Hermione went to bed feeling a little confused by the strengthening of the bond, in all the books they had read so far they had found nothing that helped them to understand what was happening.

The next evening Harry and Hermione left their transfiguration class and made straight for the room of requirements, it was well into the evening when Hermione found some thing interesting.

"There is a potion that was developed about seven hundred years ago here Harry, it is supposed to help us to control the bond magic a bit better. Do you think it might be worth trying it?"

Both of them agreed it might well be worth seeing if it helped, though Harry was a little dubious about it, it was decided that Hermione would make the potion while Harry tried studying a little more. Two weeks later the potion was ready, Harry looked down into the cauldron Hermione had used, what he saw was a swirling mass of scarlet red liquid that seemed to have a life of it's own.

As he began to lean over it to get a better look, Hermione pulled him back, "Careful Harry love, the instructions say that the potion is used by drawing in the fumes, and I haven't tested it to see if it is safe yet, I have to test if it is toxic before we use it."

"So we need to take a sample down to the potion class on our next visit?" He asked stepping back.

Hermione nodded as she ladled the potion carefully in to a large phial.  
'I'll test it in Snapes class tomorrow'.

Snape's class was if anything worse than usual, the professor was sitting totally ignoring the class as though they were not even there. Hermione took a chance at testing the potion she had brewed, taking it from her pocket she set it down on her desk then turned to fetch the testing kit. Turning back to her desk she saw Snape pick up her bottle of potion.

"So Mrs Potter making strange potions in my class eh, you do know that is against the school rules don't you?" he said as he confiscated Hermione's potion.

Harry gave a shrug 'We will have to find some other way to test it' he told her as she silently fumed at Snape.

Just as the class was finished, while everyone filed out of the dungeon Harry saw Snape pull Hermione's potion toward him and having removed the cork he was taking a huge sniff, then to Harry's utter horror the professor who should have known better, took a rather large sip of the scarlet liquid.

Harry waited as long as he dared to see if the potion had any effect on the professor, having decided he could see no life threatening developments Harry joined Hermione and went up to their quarters to leave his book bag.

Thirty minutes later a really strange sight caught Harry's eye as they sat eating their evening meal. A smiling and apparently very happy professor Severus Snape almost danced into the great hall, chuckling to himself Snape waved his wand at the Slytherin table then laughed when all the Slytherin students turned emerald green from head to toe.

Continuing on his walk through the great hall Snape again pointed his wand, this time at the Hufflepuff table, the students there all turned a rather odd black and white striped effect, oops Snape said as he then pointed his wand at the Ravenclaws, most of whom had seen what

he was doing and quickly ducked below the table out of reach. Undeterred Snape reached the teachers raised stage and pointed his wand at the stunned and shocked staff, with a giggle he waved his wand and watched with a look of glee on his face as they were all left in just their underwear, including himself.

Dumbledore was simply spluttering with fury as Snape pointed his wand at him and gave it a wave, a bright orange and blue polka dot Dumbledore roared at Snape before disarming him. Dumbledore then turned his wand on his staff and replaced their missing attire before sorting himself out, the entire student body was roaring with laughter as Snape began to waltz around the hall in just his underpants, with an apparently invisible partner.

“I don’t think we should use that potion Hermione,” Harry managed to say in between laughing and breathing in deeply.

Snape stopped his dance in the middle of the hall then pressing a finger to his lips he let out a huge shhhhhhhh, before resuming the strange dance with his invisible friend.

Two minutes later Snape sat down on a bench and fell fast asleep, a still shocked staff had not moved from their seats. Dumbledore looked around the hall as if looking for a culprit but could see no one who looked in the least bit guilty, giving up on that he walked over to Snape and levitated the professor to the hospital wing.

There was a larger than usual mess in the great hall after the meal was over, the house elves had a lot of work to do clearing up the food and drink that had been sprayed around by laughing students.

## Chapter twenty

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Rings, Roses, and an Owl.

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When he woke up from his potion induced sleep Severus Snape was sent to St Mungo's suffering from potions abuse, on his return to Hogwarts he found that he was suspended while the Govenors had a report made out on his abilities as a teacher, their enquiries so far did not bode well for the greasy haired Slytherin head of house.

Saturday morning in the middle of the term found Harry walking toward Gringotts bank accompanied once again by Rubeus Hagrid. It had taken Harry the whole week to convince Dumbledore to allow him out of the school to do something of what he considered immense importance, for some reason the headmaster had not agreed with Harry, and had repeated over and over that shopping was not important at all. It had only been due to Harry's perseverance and Dumbledore's fear that Harry might find a way to leave the school unaccompanied that had finally swayed him and he had allowed Harry to accompany Hagrid on a visit to Diagon Alley.

Entering Gringotts Hagrid lead the way to the nearest free Goblin "Harry Potter wishes ter widraw sum munee," boomed the half giants voice in the vast room echoing around the walls causing several people to turn and look at them.

"Harry Potter Hmm, one moment please," the Goblin said climbing down from his chair "this wont take long," he said as he walked away.

Two minutes later the Goblin returned accompanied by an older slightly grey skinned Goblin. "Mr Potter, if you would follow me please," the older Goblin said turning and walking briskly away.

Hagrid gave Harry a quick nod "I'll wait here."

"I'd rather have you with me Hagrid," Harry said quietly.

Harry and Hagrid followed the Goblin into a rather large office behind the main counter where the Goblin offered Harry a chair before taking the seat behind a large wooden desk.

“It has come to our attention that you Mr Potter recently got married,” the Goblin muttered as he rifled through some files and parchments.

Harry nodded “Yes, I was married just over a year ago, and... oh heck!”

“Is there some thing wrong Mr Potter?” the Goblin asked looking up from the parchment he was unrolling.

“I forgot our anniversary,” Harry answered turning a little red at this admission.

“Yes well let us not linger on that, I have here the last wills of both your father and grandfather. Your marriage invokes a clause in both your fathers and your grandfathers will’s entitling you to your full inheritance. The entire Potter, and Gryffindor family fortunes, including all Gryffindor, and Potter properties and holdings. So if you could just sign here and here on the parchment I will arrange for you to be taken to the Potter family vault,” the Goblin said pushing the parchment toward Harry.

“I never...” Harry trailed off, he was about to say he had never heard about the Potter family vault in his last life, he had only known about the fortune left by his father. He realised then that it was because he had never married in his past life. Having stopped himself before he said too much Harry read then signed the parchment as requested and passed it back to the Goblin.

Ten minutes later Harry stood staring at the most gold he had ever seen, the family vault was huge, piles and piles of gold filled most of the large vault, along side the gold there were trunks full with parchments and books, boxes of precious stones gold and silver jewellery lay at the base of the gold piles. Just to the right of the door a large ornate podium stood, an elaborately engraved glass dome stood on top of it, underneath the glass sat a golden key and two

wedding rings all adorned with the Gryffindor crest, beneath them a short note actually addressed to Harry glowed in a blue light as he approached the podium.

Harry removed the glass dome and picked up the key, 'Gryffindor Manor', was engraved along the key, then he picked up the note, "Hagrid, they left me a note," he said as he looked to the doorway where his friend stood, a strange look on his face.

Harry read the note out loud,

'Harry, these two rings are the Gryffindor wedding rings created for his heirs by the great Godric himself, they have been in the family for over a thousand years, and have been handed down to every seventh generation, enjoy the power that is bestowed upon the groom and his bride when these rings are placed upon your fingers.

I wish you a very long and happy marriage, love granddad.

Henry James Potter.

Hagrid was still standing with his mouth open and the strange look on his face. Harry realised that his friend had not heard a word he had said, turning back to the podium Harry picked up the two rings and the little box that appeared in their place, having put the rings safely into the box he placed the box along with the key safely into his pocket.

After then filling his money pouch Harry walked from the vault, Hagrid jumped when Harry gave him a gentle nudge. As though waking from a sleep Hagrid rubbed his eyes "Well Arry, lets get this door open then we kin go shop fer that ring fer Ermione."

"Hagrid I just closed the door, I have everything I need here," Harry said shaking his money pouch.

"Ow'd ya do tha, I neva saw yer open it," Hagrid exclaimed shaking his head.

“It’s part of the banks security, only those invited into the vault can see the contents,” the little Goblin that drove the cart they rode on told them.

Back in Diagon Alley Harry explained that their reason for being there no longer existed, he already had the wedding rings, but he would like to stop off and buy something special for Hermione while they had the chance.

At Hogwarts school a rather angry Hermione accompanied by Ginny Weasley, and Neville Longbottom, was making her way down to the great hall for the evening meal. Harry had been missing all day, and though she had tried to talk to him she had heard nothing from him. She was angry at Harry and she was angry at Dumbledore, who had seen fit to wait until after she Ginny and Neville had searched both the castle and grounds for her missing husband, before telling her he was in Diagon Alley with Hagrid.

Ginny could feel the power that seemed to be escaping from her best friend and was a little worried about what might happen if someone like Malfoy said some thing while Harry was not around. Ginny became even more worried when the huge doors to the great hall untouched by anyone swung open and slammed against the walls with a resounding bang as they approached. Every eye in the great hall was on them as they made their way to the Gryffindor table. They had just taken their seats when Harry and Hagrid entered the hall. Hagrid took one look at Hermione tapped Harry on his shoulder and said “Yer on yer own Arry,” then turned around and walked back out of the hall.

Harry could feel Hermione’s anger at him even from the distance she was from him, he could also feel her magic hitting him in waves, gulping a little he wondered if keeping his visit to London a secret had been wise. Taking a deep breath, Harry walked toward his wife. Some thing he had bought concealed behind his back, he was hoping the surprise he had bought her would be enough to dissipate her anger and put him back in her good books. He could hear her shouting at him in his head as he walked the length of the Gryffindor table, still he did not answer her other than to say ‘hello’.

The silence in the hall as he reached her could be felt, not even a tiny whisper could be heard, it was as though the entire school was holding its breath waiting to see what was about to happen.

“Hello love,” Harry said quietly as though the silence in the hall should not be broken.

Before Hermione could say a word Harry pulled out the gift he had been holding behind his back, a bouquet of a dozen red and gold ever lasting magical roses, he offered the roses to Hermione with an apology for forgetting their first anniversary.

As Hermione gasped at the amazing beauty of the roses her anger disappeared, as she sniffed at the wonderful aroma of the flowers a large golden coloured owl entered the hall and descended landing on her shoulder.

“He doesn’t have a name yet,” Harry said as tears developed in Hermione’s eyes.

Hermione stroked the owl lovingly “He’s beautiful,” she whispered gently taking the card tied to the owl’s leg.

‘To my only love, a belated anniversary gift, love Harry’ the card read.

Hermione stood and leaning forward she gave Harry a kiss “Thank you my love,” she said as she pulled back from him a little “but if you ever disappear without telling me again!!!”

That was the cue for the entire population with the exception of a few Slytherins to break out in applause; several of the girls who had heard the exchange had tears in their eyes as well. Ginny and Neville were fascinated by the owl “Where did you find a gold coloured owl?” Neville asked awed.

“I’ve never heard of a gold one either,” Ginny added as she stroked Hermione’s new pet.

Hermione, Ginny, and Neville, along with a crowd of other pupils were looking at and admiring the owl when Harry tapped Hermione on her

shoulder. Hermione turned around to find Harry down on one knee his hand holding something out to her. Her surprised gasp had several heads turn back around to look again at Harry, by the time Hermione had recovered from the surprise the entire school was once more watching them. Several of the nearby girls watched with a dreamy look on their faces, teary eyes watched every move the young couple made.

In the palm of Harry's out stretched hand opened to reveal its contents, sat a small purple box containing the Gryffindor wedding rings.

"I thought you should have a wedding ring," Harry said as Hermione sat staring at the rings "these are special rings made by Godric himself."

Taking Hermione's hand Harry placed a ring on her finger, the ring slowly changed size to fit her perfectly, he then gave her a gentle kiss before she reached out and shaking a little she took the other ring and very carefully placed the other ring on Harry's finger.

Their next kiss slightly more passionate released a large surge of magical power, but unlike the first time this had happened, the surge did not shoot outward knocking people from their seats, this time it shot upward to the ceiling before turning in to a mixed red and golden misty light, and beginning to swirl it fell back down engulfing both Harry and Hermione. The strange unknown power split into two before it seemed to slowly be absorbed in to the two young Potters'.

Gasps of amazement were followed by a rush of Gryffindor girls all wanting to see Hermione's wedding ring, several of the girls suggested names for the owl but Hermione had already decided on a name herself.

"Can I call you Godric?" she asked the owl as the crowd began to thin, the owl gave her a quick friendly nibble and hopped on to her arm, "I'll take that as a yes then," Hermione said as she stroked the owl's back.

A cough from the head table brought silence to the hall as Dumbledore got to his feet, "Congratulations Harry, Hermione, could

you both see me in my office after dinner please?" he said before sitting back down.

Dumbledore offered a lemon drop to his two visitors before asking about what had happened in the great hall, he had seen the red and gold misty lights just as everyone else had and he was intrigued, he had never witnessed nor heard of the strange phenomenon that had happened in the great hall, so much magic concentrated in one place was unheard of by the general wizarding community.

Harry took the note left for him by his grandfather from his pocket and handed it to the headmaster, who having read it handed it to Hermione.

"So Harry on top of the power you already held, you now possess all the power of your ancestors as well, tell me how does it feel?" Dumbledore wanted to know.

"I don't feel any different," Hermione said looking at Harry, she had felt the power as it enveloped her but the feeling had quickly vanished.

"I don't feel any different either," Harry said more to Hermione than to Dumbledore.

"I never saw anything like this before, but it must be why all the Gryffindor's and Potter's have been great wizards. We will have to wait to see the results I suppose," Dumbledore said as he watched his two powerful pupils exchange glances. "Harry could you let me know of any developments please?"

Harry nodded, he was just as baffled as Dumbledore was, both he and Hermione should be able to feel if there had been any change to their magic. He was still thinking about this when the headmaster told them they could leave when they were ready. Having bid the headmaster goodnight they made their way to their quarters. Hermione admired the wedding ring, and flowers Harry had bought her, and occasionally she stroked Godrics feathers, they stopped a number of times to kiss, both held each other gently and then passionately.

“I love you Harry,” Hermione said as they reached the portrait of the fat lady “and now with a ring for all the world to see, I feel like a truly married woman,” she said as she held her hand up and admired her ring one more time before they entered the Gryffindor common room.

## Chapter twenty one.

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### Gryffindor Manor

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Harry moved around the room very quietly as he made a pot of tea, not wanting to wake Hermione so early in the morning. He decided he would go for a walk, so with a mug of tea in hand he left their quarters then Gryffindor tower heading for the main entrance, he intended to take a walk down by the lake.

The scene that greeted him as he left the castle was one of early morning beauty, a low mist rolled gently off the lake into the surrounding valley, a bright red and gold sunrise lit the mountain scenery casting long dark shadows and brilliant swathes of orange and gold tinted light that spread the suns warming fingers slowly across the castle lawns.

Harry reached his favourite spot down by the lake and sat down on a fallen tree trunk the cool mist swirled about his feet, while the rays of the sun warmed his back. He wondered what it had been that had wakened him, he knew he had dreamt of some thing but just could not recall what it had been. Shuffling around so that he could lift his feet out of the cool mist he felt something hard in his pocket dig into him, feeling in his pocket he found the golden key he had removed from his vault at Gringotts. He sat examining the key for a while twisting it between his fingers, reading the inscription along its length he wondered aloud where Gryffindor Manor could be, with a yawn he asked the question aloud as though asking the ducks swimming nearby.

“How do I find Gryffindor manor, if I don’t know where to look for it?”

As the words left his mouth Harry saw the mist a hundred metres to his right begin to swirl and thin then from out of the mist a huge building, a cross between a small castle and a roman like villa began to appear. Curious Harry stared at the building that had appeared,

smoke rose from some of the many chimneys slowly drifting upward in the still morning air. It took him just a few minutes to walk to the great door of the ancient building, it did not take a great inspiration for him to realise that it was Gryffindor Manor. Slowly he placed the golden key into the lock of the door, the stiff lock slowly turned then with a click the door opened.

Harry entered the manor and found himself walking into a piece of history, the manor was exactly how it had been when Godric himself lived there a thousand years ago, a huge mosaic floor in the entrance lay before him. Harry had seen pictures of the ancient roman villas but those pictures did not do justice to the sight that lay before him. Huge painted murals and thick tapestries adorned the walls around him; he turned slowly taking in the grandeur of the entrance hall, in front of him a wide staircase almost the size of the one in Hogwarts led to the upper floors. He was surprised by how warm it was, and as he looked around he realised that the place was spotless, there was no dust, not a single cobweb to be seen. Standing in the middle of the mosaic floor of the entrance hall Harry suddenly realised he was not alone; he had been joined by a house elf.

“Er, hello,” Harry said as he looked down on two bright light brown eyes.

“Welcome home Master,” the elf said sounding awed and happy at the same time.

“I’m Harry, Harry Potter,” Harry declared a little quickly.

“Welcome home master Gryffindor, would the master like some breakfast?” the little elf asked as he followed Harry into the main hall.

Harry’s breath caught as he looked at the main hall, in the centre of the great mosaic floor stood a huge round table, surrounded by large comfortable chairs, ‘King Arthur and the round table’ he thought as he stared at the scene before him.

“Master... master...” the little elf said trying to get Harry’s attention.

Harry suddenly shook his head “Sorry, no, no breakfast, what is your name?”

“Odisius Pfilipius,” the little elf answered eagerly.

“Odisius fill... blimey that’s a mouthful, is it alright if I just call you Phil?” Harry asked.

The little elf nodded “If that is what the master wishes.”

“So this is Gryffindor Manor?” Harry asked.

“Yes master Gryffindor,” the little creature answered looking around “I hope the master is pleased.”

“Pleased?” Harry asked not grasping what the elf meant.

“We elves has been without the master for many, many lives now, we do’s the work handed down by our fathers, is the master pleased with our work?”

Harry looked down into the odd little face of the elf “It looks brilliant, you have done a great job. Er how many of you are there?”

“Odisius Pfilipius will fetch the others for the master,” the little elf declared before vanishing.

“He’ll be gone a while,” a voice said from Harry’s right.

Harry spun around wondering who had spoken; his mouth fell open when he saw a life size portrait of Godric Gryffindor smiling down at him.

“Tis good to have wizard to talk to after so long a time,” Godric said as Harry stepped closer.

“Godric? Godric Gryffindor?” Harry said when he eventually found his voice.

“In person sir, well almost,” Godric said chuckling “Did you expect someone else?”

Harry stared at the portrait, it could well have been a portrait of his father except for the clothes and hair, the man in the portrait had sandy coloured hair. Five minutes later Harry was being introduced to a small army of elves, he tried to count them and figured there must be around fifty of them, after he had thanked them all for taking such good care of his ancestral home, he told them all that they had done an excellent job and he was pleased with all that they and their ancestors had done, they then went back to what ever job they had been doing before his arrival.

Harry dragged up a chair and sat talking to Godric, bringing his ancestor up to date on what was happening in the world, “My wife Hermione will be able to fill in the history details, I always seemed to fail when it comes to that subject,” Harry said as his stomach began to rumble.

“Well Godric, I had best get back to the castle, Hermione has woken up and is wondering where I am, I’ll talk to you later,” Harry said standing up.

“Bring that wife of yours when you return Harry, I would like to meet her,” Godric said as Harry said goodbye.

“Oh you can rely on it,” Harry said as he made his way from the main hall.

Harry was half way back to the castle when he realised what had disturbed his sleep, it was Saturday but more importantly it was Hermione’s birthday, he had only taken a few steps after he had remembered when he clapped his hand to his forehead,

“Oh shit, I forgot Hermione’s birthday, bloody, bloody, bloody poo,” he whispered as he walked toward the main entrance.

Harry absentmindedly searched his pockets as though hoping to find something he could offer as a gift to his wife, “She is going to be so

disappointed," he told himself as he walked up the steps to the door of the castle.

That was when his hand once more found the golden key, turning to look back at Gryffindor manor he saw it was no longer visible, everything looked just as it had when he had first left the castle, fingering the key he was suddenly filled with relief, he knew exactly what he was going to give Hermione for her birthday, he would simply give her a surprise.

'Harry love where are you?' Hermione's voice asked in his head.

'Just outside the great hall sweetheart' he answered smiling; he had a little plan forming in his mind.

'Ok, you go in for breakfast, I'll be down in a few minutes' Hermione told him sounding just a little disappointed.

Harry was almost finished eating when Hermione eventually arrived down for her breakfast, "Morning love," Harry said giving her cheek a quick peck before returning to his food.

"Morning Harry," Hermione said quietly as she placed some eggs on her plate.

As Hermione finished eating and placed her knife and fork on the now empty plate Harry leaned over and placed a kiss on her cheek, "I have someone I want you to meet, would you mind if I asked McGonagall along, as she has been so good to us?"

Hermione turned to give him an odd look, on her birthday her husband wanted to go meet some one and take a professor with them, she wondered just what he was up to, he hadn't even wished her a happy birthday yet.

Shrugging her shoulders she answered a little glumly "Ok."

Harry stood and then walked up to the teachers table and after a few whispered words he and McGonagall walked to where Hermione was getting up from the Gryffindor table.

Albus Dumbledore looked on and wondered what was happening. Minerva McGonagall wondered the same thing, it seemed an odd request. Harry wanted her to accompany them while he gave Hermione her birthday present. All he had offered in explanation was that he wanted them both to meet someone.

Two rather puzzled females followed Harry down to the lakeside, when he stopped and said "We're here." Both of them looked at him as though he had gone mad. In front of them lay a large empty field; its only occupants were wild grasses.

Harry fumbled in his pocket for a minute before he offered the golden key to Hermione,

"Happy birthday Mrs Potter," he said then gave her a kiss "I didn't buy it, it's the ancestral home hope you like it."

Hermione cheered instantly as he said happy birthday, he had not forgotten, she looked down at the golden key in her hand "Its I... lovely," Hermione said as she looked at the key wondering what she was supposed to do with a key. Harry pointed at the engraving on the key, Hermione looked at it and read it out loud "Gryffindor Manor, how do I find Gryffindor Manor Harry?" she asked. Then to the surprise of herself and McGonagall the air in front of them began to shimmer and ripple as Gryffindor Manor slowly revealed itself to them.

"Happy birthday love, that's it, our ancestral home," Harry said as he gently pushed Hermione forward.

With looks of amazement both Hermione and McGonagall walked up to the huge door of the manor, Hermione placed the key in the lock and turned it, the door opened with a click. A huge smile was on Harry's face as he looked at the two females, they stood in the entrance hall, a little house elf greeting them, both of them stood with their mouths hanging wide open for a few seconds before Hermione managed to ask "Whats your name?"

The elf looked up at Hermione with an extremely happy face "Odisius Pfilipius," he replied, "would the mistress like breakfast?"

Hermione declined the offer as Harry told her he had decided to call the elf Phil, then he stepped between them taking the women both gently by an elbow he ushered them into the main hall.

“So what do you think of your present?” Harry asked a dumfounded Hermione who could only manage to move her mouth silently.

Harry walked away from them and went over to the portrait of Godric Gryffindor, “Hello Godric, I’d like to introduce you to my wife Hermione, and our deputy headmistress Minerva McGonagall,” Harry said as both he and Godric chuckled at the two amazed women.

“Professor I thought you might like to meet the founder whose house you are head of,” Harry said as Minerva moved toward the portrait.

She was still amazed that she had been invited in to something that until just a few minutes ago had been nothing but a legend, and to be standing listening to Godric Gryffindor himself talking to her was beyond her wildest dreams.

Leaving Hermione and McGonagall in the main hall talking to Godric, Harry started to look around the house; he found room after room filled with amazing historic things. He found and looked at nearly thirty rooms before going in search of Hermione, who he found along with McGonagall still in conversation with Godric. They were telling Godric about Voldemort and how Harry had faced him three times already and how he had come out on top on each occasion.

By lunch time Harry with his stomach grumbling walked back to the castle once again. This time he walked with his arm around a very happy Hermione while she cuddled up close to him and thanked him for the most brilliant birthday gift, along side them walked a quiet but very happy deputy headmistress who was eager to tell Albus Dumbledore that she had just spent an entire morning talking to Godric Gryffindor. She knew the headmaster was going to be so jealous. She also knew that Dumbledore would pester both Harry and Hermione till he persuaded them to introduce him to the great wizard founder of Hogwarts.

That evening thanks to quite a bit of running around by Harry, Neville, and Ginny, a birthday party was held for Hermione and was a huge success, most all the Gryffindor students managed to join in. Several of them arrived bearing home made greeting cards, which Hermione was extremely grateful for.

It was later that night as she and Harry sat relaxing in their quarters that Hermione decided to thank Harry for his gift, sitting in his lap she wrapped her arms around his neck and began to kiss him. The kisses she gave him that night were enough to make his getting undressed for bed just a little more embarrassing for him than was normal.

Lying in bed Harry placed his arm around his wife and whispered in her ear that maybe they should go over to Gryffindor manor in the morning with their friends and stay there until classes began on Monday morning. Both of them fell asleep feeling it had been a very good day, they were both happy.

## Chapter twenty two

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Followed

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Five thirty on Sunday morning Harry and Hermione parted company in the Gryffindor common room, Harry headed up to the boys dormitory while Hermione headed up the stairwell to the girls rooms.

"Oh come on Ginny wake up, I have some thing to show you," Hermione hissed into Ginny's ear as she shook the first year.

"Jus-five-mins-mum," Ginny mumbled as she rolled over trying to get away from Hermione's persistent hand that was shaking her shoulder.

Up in the boy's dorm Harry was having about the same luck as Hermione, Neville just did not want to wake up.

'Hermione love, I have an idea, if you say 'aqua peniculus' with a short left to right swish, you should be able to conjure a wet sponge, I'm going to levitate one over Neville's face then drop it on him when I reach the door, you can do the same with Gin, but be ready to run' Harry told her laughing.

Twin yells split the quiet of the Sunday morning as both Harry and Hermione dropped the cold wet sponges on their best friends' faces then ran for the common room. Thirty minutes and several rude words later Harry and Hermione along with two rather disgruntled friends and the Weasley twins crept quietly out of the castle and headed down to the lake.

Hermione stopped and glanced over her shoulder, past the twins that were right behind her, 'Harry I'm sure we're being followed' she told her husband as he led the way.

Albus Dumbledore woke early that Sunday morning; his sleep had been slightly troubled by his deputy headmistresses. She had been

acting just a little odd since lunchtime the day before, if he did not know better he would swear she was actually gloating over something and what ever it was it concerned the Potters'. That odd smile and the 'I know something you don't' look she had shown all through last nights supper had definitely been evident since lunch time when she had returned to the great hall with the two second year students.

Albus did not consider himself to be a nosey person, it was just that he liked to know everything that was going on in his school, and if he had to surreptitiously follow his students to find out then he was quite willing to do so. That was why he was now under a disillusionment charm following six of his students toward the lake, he wondered when they all stopped and gathered around Mrs Potter, just what it might be that she was showing them, what could she have to show them that needed the privacy of the outdoors before she could reveal it?

Harry having reached the same spot they had stood in with professor McGonagall the previous day, stopped and turned to his friends, "We have something to show you," he told them with a rather cheery smile on his face.

Hermione reached into her pocket and removed the gold key. Ginny, Neville, Fred and George gathered around her and a few whispered questions were asked, Hermione just smiled at them just has Harry had done, Ginny noted Hermione had a smile very like Harry's.

"How do I find Gryffindor Manor?" Hermione asked no one in particular.

The odd looks she got from their friends had Harry laughing, "How the heck would we know that?" Neville asked looking around at his friends bewildered faces.

Seconds later the early morning mist began to dissolve right in front of them, "Ok come on you lot," Harry called as he led the way to the front door of the Mansion that had appeared out of the swirling white vapours. Hermione placed the key in the lock and turned it.

“Good morning master and mistress,” called the cheery voice of Phil as they all entered the huge entrance hall.

“Morning Phil and you lot welcome to our home,” Hermione and Harry said together, Harry sweeping his arm in a large arc.

Albus Dumbledore was not normally one for panicking but he had just witnessed six of his young charges vanish in a swirl of mist, and nothing he did revealed where they had gone or what spell or charm had been used. He was absolutely certain that they could not have just disapparated and there was no magical residue from a port key.

‘Calm yourself, you can not just lose six students, there has to be an explanation’ Albus told himself as he removed the disillusionment charm and turned to head back up to the castle ‘I’m going to need some help’.

Harry caught a glimpse of the headmaster through the open door way as the disillusionment charm was removed and he could not resist a smile at the look of total shock and panic on the headmasters face. He also realised that if Dumbledore did not see where they had gone, which was evident by his panicked and frantic wand waving search of the spot they had been standing in when Hermione pulled out the key, then it was quite obvious that only people who were actually invited would be able to see the house, an interesting fact that might come in useful in the future.

‘Hermione love, show our guests around a little, I have to nip back outside’ Harry said as he rushed out to the headmaster.

Albus Dumbledore though not a young man by any stretch of the imagination was never the less moving about doing his search at quite a speed as Harry rushed from the house.

“Professor,” Harry called bringing the headmaster to a halt clutching at his chest in shock.

“Harry, how, where are the others?” Dumbledore asked looking surprised.

Harry had never seen the headmaster look quite so surprised before, even when Hermione had levitated him he had only looked mildly surprised.

“They are probably heading upstairs,” Harry said resisting the chuckle that threatened to escape him.

“Up... stairs... Er Harry is there something you wish to tell me?” Dumbledore said actually stumbling on his words.

“Ah, professor McGonagall didn’t tell you... about the house, about Godric?” Harry chuckled, he just couldn’t resist anymore.

“McGonagall? Godric? I must admit Harry that I find myself at a disadvantage,” Dumbledore replied looking around as if expecting his missing students to reappear.

“Harry, Godric wants a word with you,” Ginny Weasley said suddenly appearing behind Harry.

“Ok Gin,” Harry answered as he turned to the open mouthed headmaster.

“So headmaster would you care to meet with one of the four founders?” Harry asked still chuckling at the expression on Dumbledore’s face.

No sooner had Harry asked than Gryffindor Manor revealed itself to an astonished Albus Dumbledore. Harry turned and led the way, Dumbledore close on his heels “So Minerva has already met Godric Gryffindor?” Albus asked as they entered the manor.

“I thought she would have told you, she seemed rather eager to see you yesterday,” Harry said as he led the way across the entrance hall.

“Yes I feel she may well have eventually told me over breakfast this morning, I assume she just wanted a little time to enjoy knowing something I did not,” the headmaster answered with a small smile as he followed Harry, his eyes taking in the magnificence of the ancient house.

“Harry my boy,” boomed the voice of Godric as they entered the main hall.

“Morning Godric, I would like to introduce our headmaster, Professor Albus Dumbledore,” Harry said as they approached the life sized portrait.

“Ah good, tis the headmaster I wished to talk too, I was about to ask you if you could introduce us,” Godric said his cheery demeanour shining out from his portrait.

“Right then, I’ll leave you two to talk, er chat, what ever,” Harry said as he made his way back into the entrance hall. “Phil!” Harry called once he was at the base of the huge staircase.

A small pop announced the arrival of the little house elf “Yes sir master?” the little creature said bowing low.

“Could you fetch us some tea?” Harry enquired

“Tea sir? I’m not sure what the master means,” the elf said looking around worriedly.

Harry had seen the same look in Dobby’s eyes just before he began to punish himself so he spoke up quickly, “Hold it Phil, don’t you dare try punishing yourself,” Harry said as he watched his elf’s eyes.

“I want you to pop over to the castle, go up to the owlery and find my owl Hedwig, she’s the white one, ask her if she will accompany you back here, tell her Harry would like her to collect a message,” Harry said smiling at the confused look on the little fellows face.

“Castle sir? Odisius Pfilipius has never been to the castle before, thank you sir,” he said before vanishing in a small puff of mist.

‘Hermione love, have any of you found the kitchen yet’ Harry asked as he made his way down a corridor he had yet to explore.

'No Harry love we are all upstairs, did you know there are no bathrooms up here' Hermione replied as she followed Ginny into another room.

'I think I just found the bath house' Harry said as the corridor he walked down opened up into a huge mural covered bathroom, 'the bath is almost half the size of an Olympic swimming pool' Harry said as he let out a long slow breath, 'and it's warm'.

Five minutes later the six friends met up in the main hall where headmaster Dumbledore was still talking to the very first headmaster of Hogwarts.

"Harry I think we need a few things changed, I mean the entire place is exactly the way it was built when the Romans were here, we need modern toilets, and bathrooms, and a proper kitchen, and some proper furniture. How those Romans managed with so many cushions, I mean if we live here we need some updates or something, don't you think?" Hermione said as Harry was about to lead them toward the bath room.

Harry was just beginning to agree with his wife when they were all distracted by a flash of fire and the sudden appearance of Fawks, Dumbledore's phoenix. Dumbledore read the note delivered by Fawks with a frown that grew deeper as he read. "Seems there has been a breakout from Azkaban, most of Voldemort's Death Eaters are free, including Pettigrew and Malfoy."

It took Harry just a second to think through the implications, having death eaters roaming free and out for revenge would put him and his family at risk of attack; he needed to get the Granger's somewhere safe as quick as possible, somewhere a rat couldn't find. Phil the house elf returned as Harry was thinking about the best course of action to take, Hedwig landed on his shoulder giving him an idea.

"Hermione love we need to get your parents here where it is safe, as soon as we can, we should also send a letter to Mr Weasley, Malfoy will be out for revenge, there's no telling what he will do."

“We could ask the Weasleys to stay here with mum and dad, help with the modernising and stuff,” Hermione suggested.

Dumbledore agreed that both the Grangers and Weasleys would be in danger until the fugitives were recaptured and that they would be safe here at the manor.

It was a worried group of children that followed the headmaster to his office where he intended to floo call the Burrow. No one was home when Dumbledore’s head appeared in the fire of the Burrow kitchen, when Dumbledore turned his head from the fire to tell the students, Harry suggested having Dobby find Mrs Weasley and deliver her to the headmaster’s office.

“Hermione, we need to fetch mum and dad,” Harry said as the headmaster straightened up from the fire.

“Ginny you go tell Ron and Percy, when your mum arrives you can all wait here for us to get back, then we will all go over to the Manor, ok,” Harry told his red haired friend.

Dumbledore looked at Harry with confusion all over his face, this young boy was taking control of the situation and making decisions quicker than he himself could think up a plan of action.

“Headmaster, Hermione and I are going to go and fetch the Grangers, we will be back as soon as we can,” Harry said as Ginny and the twins left to find their brothers.

“Harry, how do you intend to do that? We can’t disapparate inside the castle grounds, it says so in Hogwarts a History,” Hermione declared, she could feel the worry Harry was feeling.

“Those restrictions don’t apply to us love, in the same way they don’t apply to the elves or to Fawks, not with the Gryffindor magic,” Harry replied “where do you think your parents will be at this time of day.”

Hermione checked her watch, “It’s only half past nine, I suppose if they haven’t changed their Sunday morning routine mum will be making breakfast.”

Harry took hold of Hermione's hand "We'll be back as quick as we can sir," he said to Dumbledore before they both vanished in a silent flash of golden light.

Albus Dumbledore sat down rather heavily into his chair, he just witnessed yet more proof that young Harry James Potter was a power to be reckoned with, Harry was far more powerful than Tom Riddle had been at the same age, he was in fact far more powerful than any one in their recorded history as far as Albus had been able to find out. Harry being married at such a young age had at first worried the headmaster but now the marriage was something he felt grateful for. Hermione would be a strong stabilizing force in Harry's life, with her by his side there seemed very little chance that Harry would ever turn to the wrong path no matter what happened. Albus remembered the bruises that had been revealed on the underfed and malnourished boy, 'putting the wizarding worlds future at risk by placing Harry with the Dursleys had been just about the biggest mistake I ever made, it's a wonder the boy knows wrong from right', Dumbledore thought as he sat and waited.

A/Note sorry about the cliffie but the next part will be along soon.

## Chapter twenty three

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### Moving In.

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Albus Dumbledore had been waiting impatiently in his office with the Weasley children for more than thirty minutes when there was a sudden pop sound and Dobby the house elf and a rather flustered Molly Weasley arrived, Dobby had not waited to be told if there was anything he should say to the Weasley matriarch so she had no idea why she had been almost forcefully delivered into Dumbledore's office.

The next arrivals were an even bigger surprise for the headmaster when just five minutes later Harry and Hermione arrived with Mr and Mrs Granger. Dumbledore thought he might have been able to smooth things out a little easier if the Grangers had not been petrified, as it was it took him the better part of an hour to convince the Grangers that the danger they were in was truly life threatening and that Harry had acted in their best interests.

While Harry and Dumbledore tried to soothe the ruffled feathers of Mr Granger, Hermione took everyone else out to Gryffindor Manor. Mrs Grangers' mouth fell open when Hermione told her that the house had been a birthday gift from Harry. It did not take Mrs Weasley long to begin to work out what was needed to update the ancient building and she made up plans that would entail very little change to the character or design of the house, she also recommended a specialist wizarding building company who had helped with the Burrow when it underwent some alterations.

Hermione pictured in her mind, the rather wonky building that was the Burrow, after giving it a little thought she decided to ignore the feeling that anyone who helped build the Burrow had to be at least a little cross eyed, and allowed Mrs Weasley to send her owl Godric to the builders with a message.

Ginny and the twins found the bath room Harry had told them about and were soon begging Dobby to take them to the castle so that they could get their swimming costumes, Ginny having persuaded the little elf to take her to the girls dorm arranged to bring back Harry and Hermione's costumes when she returned.

Hermione with help from her mother and Mrs Weasley chose a room just off the main hall to turn into a sitting room, while she and Mrs Weasley conjured some furniture by transfiguring some of the many old cushions that lay around the entire house, Mrs Granger set about arranging the furniture to turn the room into a very comfortable place for them to relax.

Ginny, Neville, Ron, and the twins went swimming in the warm water of the enormous bath. Mr Granger took charge of making plans and drawings for the remodelling of the house after looking over Mrs Weasleys notes; Harry left him working with some house elves in the enormous kitchen that still had stone, clay and brick ovens. Percy was sent to recruit Hagrid who was asked if he could organise for them a more modern means of cooking, which as it happened was a simple task because he had access to the old store rooms up at the castle, an hour and a half after being recruited both Hagrid and Percy stepped back from the work Hagrid had been doing and grinned with satisfaction, the old wood burning cooker he had fitted would be large enough even for Molly Weasley to be happy with.

Harry smiled at Hermione as Mrs Weasley called them all into the kitchen for their evening meal 'well at least we are guaranteed some good food' he said as he took her hand and followed Mrs Granger.

Hermione looked around the large wooden table Mrs Weasley had conjured, quietly watching as everyone chatted away, she turned to Harry and commented as they ate, about how everyone had somehow settled into the large house as though they had lived there for years. Harry nodded and thought how much better it was than having a meal in the great hall up at the school.

With permission from Dumbledore, Harry, Hermione, the Weasleys and Neville were allowed to stay over night at the manor, there was a free for all at ten that evening when Mrs Granger told them it was

time for bed, the rush by his friends to find and lay claim to the best bedroom made Harry laugh as he and Hermione stood back and watched.

Mr Weasley arrived just in time to help his wife transfigure some nice cosy beds for everyone, before the adults all retired to the living room.

Harry and Hermione made their way up to the top floor and found the largest bedroom either of them had ever seen, it was almost as large as the transfiguration class room, With a few flicks and swishes of his wand Harry created a whole set of bedroom furniture, even with everything in the position chosen by Hermione the bed room still looked rather empty, Harry conjured a wall to wall carpet in Gryffindor red, then just to add to the effect he conjured two large armchairs and a sofa just like they had in the Gryffindor common room. The bed they slept in was large and very comfortable and they fell asleep in each others arms shortly after kissing goodnight.

On the following Monday Mr and Mrs Granger left for home with Dobby and two of the house elves, to collect some of their things along with the body guard that Dumbledore had arranged for them, Mr and Mrs Weasley were still enjoying the novelty of having yet another house to carry out updates on.

Hermione had to hold her breath to keep from laughing when the recommended builder turned up and actually was cross eyed, though she soon realised that his workmanship only suffered from Mr Weasleys often unhelpful help.

For the next few weeks Harry and Hermione left the castle and made at least one visit a day to their house to see the improvements being made, usually in the evening after visiting Hagrid, who was still busy rearing a rather odd and slightly vicious three headed dog that he had named fluffy, though neither Harry nor Hermione could see anything remotely fluffy about the animal.

As the term moved toward Christmas their house was completed, fitted with a new kitchen and several bathrooms, they had decided that several of the smaller rooms should have lower ceilings and contain the normal furnishings found in most wizarding homes, these

rooms were all decorated in a modern style as well, though Hermione thought that the modern wizarding style was at least one or even maybe two hundred years behind muggle homes she ok'd all the work Mrs Weasley and her father suggested. She did admit when it was all finished that they had all done an excellent job with the modernising, though Harry suspected she had said that because she had been standing in their new library when asked what she thought.

Harry played in and helped win the final quidditch game before Christmas, it was at the end of this game as he beat Malfoy and caught the snitch from very close to the Whomping willow that he had an idea, as he flew back to join his team mates the plan formed in his head, it was a wicked, maybe even evil plan but it made him smile, he would make Voldemort regret the day he ever heard the name Potter, he would make the stupid snake face really suffer before he finished him off for good.

When the Christmas holidays finally arrived, instead of Harry and Hermione going to the Grangers they already had Hermione's parents staying with them, they sent out an invite to Hermione's grand parents to spend Christmas with them. The entire Weasley family were to join them on the day after Christmas and stay till the start of the new term.

When the elder Grangers arrived Harry having hugged Mrs Granger and been kissed on both cheeks then shaken hands with Mr Granger suggested that Hermione show them all the work they had had done on the house, he remembered to tell her to point out all the suggestions that her parents had made on their first visit while he went for a walk around the lake. Hermione readily agreed and was very happy to have her grand parents around her once again.

Harry left the house and began to walk around the lake, once out of sight of both the house and the castle Harry pulled his invisibility cloak from his pocket and wrapped it around him self. Walking briskly he went toward the main exit and then under cover of his invisibility cloak he made his way through the main gates to the road outside, once there he apparated to Little Hangleton arriving in the grave yard. Having found the grave he was after he pulled out his wand and with great care Harry removed all the bones of Tom Riddle senior and his

family, he triple checked he had left no bone what so ever behind before he turned what bones he had removed into dust then placing all the dust into a bag. With the bag placed safely in his cloak pocket he transfigured some yew tree branches into bones and placed them in the open grave. A quick check on his handiwork confirmed he had done all he wanted to do in the grave yard, with a quick flick of his wand he filled in the grave and returned the undisturbed look of the grave yard to how it had been when he arrived.

Having done all he had set out to do for now Harry apparated to the gates of Hogwarts, then with his cloak once more hiding him from any peering eyes he made his way to the lake where he removed his cloak and emptied the bone dust into the surrounding shrubbery he then continued his walk around the lakes edge.

Two days later Harry, Hermione and the two sets of parents visited Hogsmeade and did their Christmas shopping, both Mr and Mrs Granger were fascinated by the magical shops, and amazed by the things that could be bought. Harry ended up buying Hermione her first pair of ear rings and matching pendant, he also bought her an updated version of Hogwarts a history from the book shop, and a piece of parchment that had 'I owe you a thousand kisses' printed on it. For all the Grangers he bought matching his and hers dragon hide winter coats, guaranteed to keep a person warm down to minus forty degrees. The rest of the time he and Hermione spent buying gifts for the Weasleys, Sirius, Remus, and Neville, then having a meal with the Grangers in the Three Broomsticks.

On Christmas eve morning Harry joined Mr Granger in putting up decorations, together the two had a good time filled with laughter when something did not go quite according to plan. Having finished the decorations Mrs granger suggested they take a walk to the edge of the forest to gather a tree. They heard the thumping before they arrived at the forest edge, Harry and Hermione drew their wands and crept forward only to surprise Hagrid who had had the same idea and was chopping down a small tree.

'Hagrid's on his own for Christmas' Hermione said looking at their huge friend.

‘Well invite him to come stay with us, it’s not like we haven’t got the room’ Harry replied ‘I wonder why we never thought about him before’.

‘I suppose it’s because we always spent Christmas away from Hogwarts before’ Hermione said smiling at the giant of a man as he swung his huge axe.

Hagrid had a tear in his eye when Hermione asked if he would spend Christmas with them, his voice cracked a little as he thanked them “I ain’t not ad a chrismas with a family for a long time,” he said as they watched the tree he had been chopping fall.

“You can bring fang as well, though the house isn’t quite large enough for Fluffy,” Harry said as he helped Hagrid tie a rope to the tree.

“Migh as well take this ere tree ter your place then,” Hagrid said a huge smile spreading across his face somewhere under his bushy black beard.

The Potters’ had a surprise when they arrived back at the house, as they found Sirius waiting there for them. “Blinking house couldn’t find the door, couldn’t find the darn house come to think of it,” Sirius laughed as he grabbed Harry in a bear hug.

“Remus will be along shortly,” Sirius told them as he shifted his attention to Hermione giving her a huge hug as well, then like some old chivalrous cavalier he did a sweeping bow to Mrs Granger and kissed her hand, before he vigorously shook hands with Mr Granger.

“So I get to have my entire family apart from my little sister here for Christmas day,” Harry said a huge smile on his face.

Mr and Mrs Granger and Sirius looked at Harry with confusion on their faces.

“He means Ginny,” Hermione said chuckling.

They woke up on Christmas day to find it snowing heavily, after breakfast Mr Granger suggested they go out and indulge in a snow ball fight.

They were joined in the middle of a rather frantic snowball fight by Neville who had convinced his ancient grandmother to allow him to visit his friends, Neville was chosen to fight on Hagrid and Sirius's side in the snowball fight, because as Hagrid said "There's ony two o us, but you lot can't bloomin miss me."

Harry and Hermione's Christmas could not have been much happier.

## Chapter twenty four

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### Shopping

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Just a short few weeks into the new term, news that Harry and Hermione were now practically unreachable due to the fact that they did not have to leave Hogwarts grounds to travel home soon reached the news papers.

Quite an intricate story seemed to have been woven around Harry commandeering the bigger half of Hogwarts castle as his home, because it had been discovered that he was the heir to the Gryffindor properties. Harry was not too interested in the stories, but they seemed to annoy Hermione immensely she did not want people thinking, as she put it, her extremely generous husband was greedy like a Malfoy would be.

Once Hermione decided to do something positive about it Harry knew it would be a waste of time trying to change her mind. That was why early on a Saturday morning half way through the school term he found himself waiting at the school gates with Hagrid. They were waiting for a team of Witch Weekly reporters and general hangers on to arrive. They were going to do a piece on 'The Potter's at home', or at least that was what Hermione had told him.

Hermione had gotten the idea from a Muggle magazine her mother had delivered every month. Harry Potter was not at all happy when amongst the reporters from Witch Weekly he spotted his least favourite reporter. Rita Skeeter was trying to gate crash; her little share of bad luck for that day was in Harry knowing that she worked for the Daily Prophet and not Witch Weekly which he was quick to point out to the other reporters.

For a short while Harry thought that Rita might actually get herself lynched for trying to steal the scoop from the Witch Weekly reporters, as it was she managed to escape with her clothes torn and her hair

messily disarranged. Harry couldn't help laughing when she finally escaped the other screeching women reporters and ran headlong toward Hogsmeade village spilling the contents of her hand bag as she ran; she was closely followed by her cameraman who was wearing a lot less clothing than he should have been.

Harry managed to last for the first fifteen minutes of having the reporters following him around the house and asking a baffling array of questions which had nothing to do with his home at all, he had had enough when one of the women reporters tried to follow him into the bathroom.

At the first chance he got he slipped his invisibility cloak out of his robe pocket and placed it over his head, wrapped up in the cloak and hidden from view he made his way out of the house, he first took refuge with Hagrid in his hut, gratefully accepting a cup of tea but politely refusing one of Hagrid's aptly named rock cakes. Then he later accompanied his huge friend up to the school to have lunch in the great hall with his class mates and his best friends, Hermione was shouting in his head, telling him exactly what she should like to do to him for vanishing and leaving her to cope with all the reporters, all through lunch while he sat with Neville and Ginny eating lunch Hermione lectured him. Neville thought the entire thing hilarious and did not try to hide the fact; twice he spat his drink out when Harry actually flinched as though Hermione had just yelled into his ear.

"Just one of the drawbacks to having this kind of communication with the wife, most blokes get to enjoy their escapades away from home and only have the lecture when they get back," Harry chuckled as they left the great hall.

Half an hour of Hermione lecturing him was enough to make the Quidditch hero of Gryffindor surrender; he promised Hermione he would be straight home, both Ginny and Neville began to laugh until Harry said they were going to accompany him thus providing him with some protection from his irate wife.

After returning home Harry tried his best to keep the reporters happy, but he drew the line when one of the women wanted to take photographs of his boxers, 'Hermione, they have to go, and I mean

now' he told his wife who was showing her wardrobe to one of the story hungry writers.

Thirty minutes later Hermione waved goodbye to the reporters as they left to return to Diagon Alley and their offices to complete their write up of the Potters at home. Once rid of the reporters Hermione needing to unwind headed for the library, Neville, Harry, and Ginny, changed into their swimming outfits and spent an hour in the bath house as they called it, totally relaxed they then joined Hermione in the library.

Hermione was studying the book Harry had bought her for her twelfth birthday, 'Manuscripts of Merlin'. She was convinced that there were many secrets hidden within the ancient scripts, quite a good part of the latter half of the book was written in a runic language, though to date no one had been able to decipher it. Hermione decided she would have a try.

As spring turned into summer and the days became warmer Hagrid began to spend more time with Harry and Hermione, the two students were helping their friend prepare for his new position that he would take up at the beginning of the next term. Hagrid was to become professor of care of magical creatures, it did not take many of the huge mans visits for the young Hermione to realise what Harry already knew, that their friend had some strange ideas as to what constituted a cute animal, but then she thought that someone with a three headed dog and a love of dragons might just see animals differently than the rest of the world. It was during one of these visits that Hagrid suggested that if Hermione needed help deciphering the book she should enlist the help of the oldest person they knew, 'Godric'.

"If any one'll know it'll be im," Hagrid said casually as they drank tea one day. By ten that evening Hermione had had two of the house elves move Godric into the living room, he was placed right above the desk she used for her studying. It took Godric two months to teach Hermione enough to allow her to read the runes in the book, but she was really disappointed when she found nothing of great interest as she flipped through the pages.

Also with Godric's help through out the year the two young Potter's spent quite a good deal of time learning to control their magic, Harry had been able to perform extraordinarily strong spells just by thinking of them, and he had very rarely lost control over this amazing amount of magical energy. This was something he had not been able to do before without great effort. Hermione however had some teething troubles, the main thing being holding back on her power when they were in class. When Harry was around her Hermione's magic was so powerful that even simple spells and charms had to be performed with great care, Godric told them that Hermione was tapping into Harry's magic when they were together and she seriously considered taking her classes at different times to Harry. It was with the encouragement of Godric that she continued as normal while she learned how to actually control how much if any of Harry's magic she tapped into.

Now as the school year came towards its end and the holidays seemed to be rushing at them like the Hogwarts express, Hermione had disciplined herself fully and was now as able as Harry when it came to using wandless magic.

Hermione wanted Harry to take her on a shopping trip to Diagon Alley, though she refused to say what it was she wanted he knew she was thinking about his fast approaching birthday.

On the Saturday morning with Sirius as their guard, they left home to go shopping, while Sirius went with them to have breakfast first and then after having been to Fortiscue's for an ice cream, which was Sirius's idea, and then on to madam Malkin's for some new robes, the two wizards followed Hermione who was making toward Flourish and Blotts. Harry suggested that he leave her and Sirius to do her shopping, while he popped into the pub for a quick butterbeer, thinking it would give her time to buy his present without having to think of a way of hiding it from him, so with Sirius and Hermione's agreement, he gave her a quick kiss and made his way across the road to the Leaky Cauldron.

While talking to Tom the bartender and two of his customers Harry got into a conversation with one of the local wizard artists, the fellow mentioned the portrait that his parents had commissioned just before

they had been killed. The knowledge that there was a portrait of his parents came as a shock to Harry, as in his previous time he had not heard of it, that was some thing he would have treasured, he was wondering what might have happened to it when he realised that the artist was talking to him once again.

“Sorry what were you saying,” Harry asked absently.

“I was just saying, if you would like to collect it, it will cost you of course, I only got paid the commissioning fee, I finished it out of respect for your parents, they were two of the nicest people I ever had sitting in my studio,” the artist said as he handed Harry a piece of paper with the studio address on.

“When would we be able to collect it?” Harry asked eagerly.

“How about two this afternoon? I have half an hour free after professor Dumbledore so I’ll have it already for collection,” the older wizard answered as he lifted his glass and finished his whiskey.

“See you at two,” Harry said as he finished his butterbeer and left the pub, across the road Hermione followed by his godfather was just walking into Flourish and Blotts, ‘She must have taken the opportunity to slip off to buy my present’ he thought as he crossed the Alley and followed her into the shop.

“Oh Harry sweetheart, I’m not finished in here yet,” Hermione said a guilty look on her face.

Harry chuckled to himself; she couldn’t admit she had been to another shop without telling him why, he thought it amusing and cute as he watched her blush a little, something she had always done when telling a little white lie.

“It’s ok love, we have plenty of time as long as we can be at the ‘Mystery Emporium’ by two,” he said picking a book randomly from the nearest shelf.

“What ever do you want to go there for, don’t tell me you are thinking of taking Divination seriously?” Hermione asked with a small laugh.

“What on earth has Divination got to do with anything?” Harry asked with a puzzled look.

“The Mystery Emporium is where Trelawney buys her fortune telling things,” Hermione said as she giggled.

“Actually I need to go to the studio above the shop dear, and why the heck are you laughing?” Harry asked looking at his wife and his godfather.

“The book Harry,” Sirius said nodding at the book Harry was absently flipping through.

Harry looked at the title and nearly dropped the book right there; it was titled ‘A young Witch’s guide to birth and motherhood’. Harry quickly slammed the book shut and pushed it back on the shelf.

At ten past two Harry was standing in the artist studio with the artist, slowly he walked around the wooden crate that stood nearly eight feet high and just over four and a half feet wide. He had just been informed that he could not perform a shrinking charm on the crate as it would cause irreparable damage to the portrait, he couldn’t perform a levitating charm due to the age restrictions, and there was no way he was going to be able to get the crate into a floo.

Then after several trips around the studio scratching his head every so often he finally had an idea.

“Dobby,” he called out hoping the elf would hear him “Dobby.”

Seconds later a loud pop announced the arrival of Dobby the little house elf, “Harry Potter sir, called for Dobby?” he said his huge eyes smiling.

“Yes Dobby, I wondered if you could do me a favour, I have to get this crate home undamaged without shrinking it, do you think you could take it for me, please,” Harry asked politely.

“Dobby is honoured to help his friend Harry Potter sir,” the elf said just before he took hold of the crate and vanished.

Down stairs Harry joined Sirius and Hermione who were discussing the fraud’s that taught Divination at Hogwarts. “Didn’t you get what you wanted love?” Hermione asked as he joined them.

“Yes, it was all ready, Dobby has taken it home for me,” Harry answered feeling eager to get home and hang the portrait in their living room alongside the one of Godric.

Taking hold of Sirius’s hands the two Potter’s apparated from the Mystery Emporium to just outside Gryffindor Manor. Harry was a little surprised when they entered the entrance hall and he did not find the crate he had asked Dobby to deliver.

“Welcome home master and mistress,” Phil said as he bowed to Harry first then to Hermione who tutted.

“Phil we asked you not to bow, and to call us Harry and Hermione,” she said a little exasperated.

“Yes Her-my-o-nee, mistress,” Phil answered trying not to bow.

“Phil, did Dobby bring a crate here?” Harry asked wondering where the elf could have got too.

“Yes master, I is put it in the living room,” Phil said suddenly looking worried.

“Oh good, well done,” Harry said as he headed for the living room followed by Hermione and Sirius.

The surprise that awaited them when they entered the living room had all three of them standing gaping with their mouths wide open.

“Ah I see you are back,” Godric said a huge smile on his face.

A/Note Sorry about leaving it here but I thought this was just about the right place, the next chapter will mainly be about Harry’s plan for

Voldemort, so I want to get on with that, do hope you don't mind too much.

## Chapter twenty five

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### Portraits and Graveyards.

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Sirius Black, comic, prankster, and generally happy go lucky chap, stood staring at the portrait of Lily and his best friend James, tears of mingled sorrow and joy ran down his cheeks as he tried to find some words to apologise to them for letting them down. Harry realised that Sirius was still blaming himself for the fate of his parents. He had no idea how to help his godfather come to terms with what had happened other than to reassure Sirius that Peter Pettigrew was the true culprit.

It was Lily who broke the silence “Hello Sirius,” she said a pleasant smile on her face.

“Hello Lily love,” Sirius managed between sniffs “and you Prongs old friend.”

James in turn was staring out of the portrait at Harry, there was a rather long silent pause before anyone else spoke, then Harry swallowed and walking toward the portrait he too shed some tears.

“Hello mum, dad,”

“H- H- Harry?” James stuttered as Harry approached.

“Yes dad, it’s me, Harry, you have no idea how good it is to be able to hear you speak,” Harry said as he gently reached out to touch the portrait.

Lily reached down with her hand touching the spot where Harry’s hand rested on the canvas “Oh sweetheart, I’m so sorry if we were not there for you,” she said seconds before she too was crying.

Hermione joined the two men in the living room as soon as she had put away her shopping; Sirius was just telling James and Lily about some of their son's life up to that point, when she walked into the room.

James looking at something over Harry's shoulder alerted them that she had arrived. Harry turned around 'Hi sweetheart come say hi to my mum and dad' Harry said to her as she held out her hand to him.

"This is my wife Hermione, she's the most beautiful and brilliant witch alive," Harry said to his parents.

"He's right you know, she really is the cleverest person I ever met, and she is an extremely powerful witch to boot," Godric said joining in the conversation from his own portrait.

Hermione blushed a bright red "Hello Mr, Mrs Potter," she said rather quietly.

"So you are my little boy's soul-mate," Lily said smiling at the younger witch.

"Harry my boy, you must take after me because you sure picked a very pretty young woman," James said with a small laugh "I would agree with you about the most beautiful but," he broke off and looked at Lily and nodded before laughing quietly once again.

"James Potter, don't talk about your daughter in law as if she's not here," Lily scolded, "sorry about that Hermione but, well he's a man, you know what they are like."

"Yes Mrs Potter, I know," Hermione said looking at Harry and chuckling.

James tutted "Now, now my girl," he said as he clasped his robe collar in both hands and reminded Hermione of a lawyer "you can't go calling us Mr and Mrs Potter, it just doesn't seem right."

"Sorry, would dad and mum be ok?" Hermione said blushing again.

“Ah now that’s much better,” James said puffing out his chest.

Harry drew up three chairs and then the six people, three living and three portraits sat talking until way past dinner time. The older Potters were brought up to date on all that had happened in their son’s life, Hermione had insisted on telling about how Harry had been treated by the Dursleys and how Dumbledore had known about it but had done nothing. Sirius and Hermione left Harry talking to his parents at around ten that evening to go to their beds.

Half way through the holiday Harry and Hermione were invited once again to stop at the Burrow with Ginny, Mrs Weasley had turned the old shed into a bedroom for them, though not quite as lavish as the first time it was still very comfortable. They had spent an entire week without being pranked by the twins, growled at by Ron or disturbed by Dumbledore, but all that ended on the Thursday. Harry and Hermione had gone to bed a little early being tired from playing a little two on two quidditch with their friends, at around eleven Hermione woke Harry and asked him to accompany her while she went to the house to use the bathroom.

Waiting on the landing out side the bathroom, Harry heard voices coming from the kitchen, moving closer to the top of the stairs where he could hear who was talking, he heard Mr Weasley saying that the escaped Peter Pettigrew had been sighted just a little further to the south.

“I never even knew he had escaped,” Mrs Weasley said as she put away all the washing.

“Well, remember when Fudge was caught,” Mr Weasley said leaving the rest to his wife’s imagination.

“Time for bed love,” Mrs Weasley said with a yawn.

Harry heard the two adults start up the stairs, quick as he could he rushed back to the bathroom and quietly slipped inside, “Sorry love,” he whispered to Hermione who was just washing her hands, he placed a finger over her lips as she was about to speak.

‘Let’s go to our room quick’ he told her as he heard the Weasleys approaching.

With silent pops both Harry and Hermione apparated to the shed. Sitting on the bed Hermione wanted to know what was going on.

‘I think it’s time we got rid of Voldemort’ Harry remarked as though it was something they did every day.

‘But first we have a small problem to discuss, now you know about the Horcrux’s and how hard they were to destroy’ Harry said slowly.

Hermione knew he had something very serious to talk about even without their connection, she could see it in his face, and she could feel it through the bond, it was something she was not going to like. “Ok Harry James Potter, just how bad is this?”

“It’s about as bad as it can get love,” Harry answered still unsure about how to tell his wife about him possibly being the last Horcrux.

“You are not going to like this,” Harry said looking into Hermione’s eyes.

“Well you should let me decide that, don’t you think?” Hermione said plucking up her courage.

Taking a deep breath Harry told Hermione all about the last Horcrux, adding that Voldemort may have made another and they would need to kill the pet snake he kept with him all the time just to be sure.

As Harry finished he looked up into the teary eyes of his wife “We have to go to Hogwarts, we need to tell Dumbledore, see if he has any ideas,” she said after taking a breath.

Neither of them were able to sleep that night so Harry spent time telling her about his plan and what he had done so far, “The thing is I haven’t worked out how to get the Death Eaters there yet,” he ended with.

"Well just suppose your plan works, which from what you say it should, with him incapacitated then Voldemort wont be able to summon them so we don't have to worry about them," Hermione said quietly as she thought of all the possible out comes.

"The problem with that is, all those murdering slime balls get to walk away scot free that way," Harry answered carefully. He was trying to think of a way to improve on his plan but was coming up with nothing.

"Suppose if you were actually there and you could convince him you had a large number of Aurors arriving very soon to help you capture him, surely he or Wormtail would summon them to help before you carry out your plan," Hermione said as a plan of her own formed in her head.

The only part Harry did not like about Hermione's plan was she planned to be with him when he faced Voldemort. But not being able to come up with a better plan he shrugged his shoulders, "Ok Hogwarts in the morning then," Harry finally agreed.

The following morning at six-o-clock Harry sent Hedwig with a message for Sirius to meet them at Hogwarts as soon as he could, then both he and Hermione went into the Burrow to talk to Mr Weasley before he left for work.

Once they had told Mr Weasley of their plans they took the floo to Hogwarts, arriving in the headmasters study, much to the surprise of Albus Dumbledore. Hermione related her plan to the head master while Harry sat talking to Fawkes the phoenix.

Harry couldn't help but chuckle at the irony when Dumbledore made a few suggestions to improve their plans, the main one was for Harry to use the link he had with Voldemort to let Tom Know that Harry and Hermione would be visiting Little Hangleton that evening with the intention of capturing Wormtail who he was convinced was hiding in the church there. Harry was to keep from them that he knew Voldemort would be there as well.

During the rest of the day Dumbledore spent his time quietly and without raising any suspicions gathering a small force of the old order

of the phoenix, Sirius, Remus, Arthur and Bill Weasley, several of the professors, Mad eye moody and several Aurors and other people all gathered awaiting evening when they hoped to strike the final blow against the evil that was once Tom Riddle.

As four thirty approached Dumbledore led the small force of thirty witches and wizards out of the castle grounds, they were to apparate to Hangleton then under disillusionment charms they were to work their way slowly to Little Hangleton and surround the church yard and then await Hermione's signal.

At five that evening Harry suffered the immense pain that accompanied the connection to Voldemort, it was the first time he had felt the pain for many years and he had almost forgotten just how bad it really was. Forcing himself to remain in control he let slip the thoughts that he and his wife were on the way to Little Hangleton church in search of Wormtail the traitor of his parents.

At five thirty Harry and Hermione silently vanished from Dumbledore's office, arriving just as silently in Little Hangleton Graveyard. While Hermione took up a position near to Tom Riddle seniors' grave, hidden by Harry's invisibility cloak, Harry made his way toward the church. The first stunning spell that came at Harry missed by several inches, not taking the risk of their plan failing Harry dived for cover and returned an Expelliarmus spell to where he had seen the first spell cast.

Slowly Harry allowed Wormtail to back him into the centre of the grave yard, then Harry sent a stunner which to his dismay actually hit Wormtail full on making the traitor drop the bundle he was holding, there was a sort of squeak and then a high pitched squeal of rage as Voldemort's tiny talon like fingers grasped his wand and sent a flurry of spells at Harry.

Hermione seeing that their plan was about to fall apart let the cloak fall from around her self revealing her head and shoulders to the evil little thing that was Voldemort.

Voldemort filled with rage about having failed in his own plan to catch Harry, cast the death spell at Hermione, Harry reacting like lightening

on seeing the green light leave Voldemort's wand leapt in front of Hermione.

There was total silence as the spell hit Harry in his chest, Glassy eyed Harry collapsed to the ground dead. Hermione rushed to cradle her husbands lifeless head in her lap as Wormtail began to recover from the stunner, just a few seconds later and Wormtail was dragging Hermione away from Harry's body toward Tom Riddle senior's grave, once there Voldemort ordered the traitor to hold out his arm, with his wand pressed hard onto the Death Eater mark on Wormtail's arm Voldemort summoned all his Death Eaters to him so that they could witness the fact that Potter was now dead.

Dumbledore and those with him had watched the battle and were now in shock as they looked on, their plan had not only failed but their hope for the future lay dead on the ground surrounded by Death Eaters. None of them moved, Arthur Weasley stood and allowed silent tears to run down his face as he looked at the body of the boy he would have been proud to call son.

After gloating around Harry's body for a few minutes the Death Eaters gathered around Hermione. Dumbledore and his small force could do nothing until they saw a chance to free the captured girl and so they waited and prayed.

Wormtail conjured a large cauldron and chanted his way through the ritual he had been practicing, he summoned the bones from the grave of Voldemort's father, then he chopped off his own hand before dropping the vile looking child into the cauldron, then as he approached Hermione to take some of her blood he was hit by a stunner.

Harry Potter alive and well stood up, and using the bond between them he silently called his wife to him, Hermione vanished from amongst the Death Eaters and reappeared at Harry's side, together they took cover behind a huge gravestone.

We just need to kill that snake Harry said as Hermione sent a reducto spell behind them; she grimaced at the result of the spell hitting the

Snake on its head splattering nearly a quarter of the snake over the nearby graves.

“Scratch one snake,” Harry said without turning around.

All around the Potters the order members had recovered from their shock and were battling with the Death Eaters, Harry held his hands up in the air and cast an anti apparition shield, it would end today, he was not about to let any of the Death Eaters escape.

Hermione was casting stunning spells without her wand or using her hands, she simply chose one of the Death Eaters thought of hitting him with a spell then watched as the red light found its target. Harry watched her for a while till she smiled at him and asked if he intended to help or just watch her do it all.

‘You look really; really cute when you are angry, do you know that?’ Harry told her as he joined in picking off their enemies.

‘Let’s hope you still think so when you find out why I’m bloody angry’ she replied stunning another Death Eater.

‘Hermione Potter, language’ Harry said chuckling.

Five minutes later the battle was over, all that was left was for Harry to complete his plan to rid the world of Voldemort.

With all the stunned and other wise injured Death Eaters bound firmly, Harry, Hermione, and Dumbledore, accompanied by all their force gathered around the large cauldron that was still bubbling. Pointing his hand at Wormtail he summoned the filthy and blood stained traitor. With a quick flick of his hand Harry stemmed the flow of blood that was seeping through the cloak wormtail had wrapped around the stump of his arm where he had chopped off his own hand as sacrifice to Voldemort.

“Peter, I want you to do something for me, if you try to escape me you will be dead before you finish transforming, do you understand?” Harry said in a sort of friendly voice.

Wormtail shaking like a leaf nodded,

"Good, now I want you to finish the ritual you were performing, I would like to know what it was all about," Harry said a small smile on his lips.

Harry noticed Wormtail's eyes light up as the rat thought he was about to do what he had first hoped to do, the fool boy would have a real surprise when the dark lord stepped from the cauldron and killed them all. Peter had to struggle to keep from laughing as he told Harry he would need some blood with which to finish what he started.

Harry pulled out a small silver knife and stuck it in his palm, he then turned slightly away from Wormtail as he searched his pockets, turning back to the rat Harry handed the evil little man a small vial. Wormtail still struggling to keep from laughing tipped the contents of the vial into the bubbling cauldron and finished the ritual then stood back as the cauldron began to bubble more fiercely.

A few seconds later a bright light engulfed the cauldron making everyone step back a few paces, several flashes of lightening like lights erupted from the depths of the light around the cauldron then the cauldron shattered and in its place a twisted and bent yew tree began to grow, it stopped when it reached around seven feet high.

Harry walked around the tree a smile on his face, then he found what he was looking for, a vague distorted face grew within the bark, "Hello Riddle, I must say when I planed this I had no idea that you would actually become a tree, still I must admit it does seem rather better this way. You see I just thought it would have poisoned you, maybe stopped you growing at all, I mean Yew trees are supposed to be poison."

An eerie wail came from the tree and then an anguished scream "Noooooooooooooo".

"Oh yes Tom Riddle, self named Lord Voldemort, murderer, torturer, and foul beast, I swopped your fathers bones for Yew tree branches, then the blood I just gave Wormtail was Yew tree sap, strange how

justice has a way of catching up with you, don't you think?" Harry said as he sat down on a grave stone just a few feet from Riddle.

Dumbledore and those who had come with him all crowded behind Harry and stared in astonishment at the contorted face in the tree trunk. Hermione sat down next to Harry and took his hand in hers.

"Harry you need to cut it down, there must be no chance of him ever coming back, only you can end this," she said giving his hand a squeeze.

Harry looked at Dumbledore and with out moving he summoned the headmaster's wand, pointing it at the tree he took in a deep breath "Good bye Tom," he said as he sent a cutting charm across the bottom of the tree trunk.

As the tree toppled the roots curled up and began to shrivel away, several more cutting curses later and the tree was just a pile of logs, and fire wood.

With a large frown on his face Albus Dumbledore walked around checking out the injured, before Riddle was destroyed there had been just three deaths, all of them had been Death Eaters caught by spells from their own side, Lucius Malfoy, Bellatrix LeStrange, and Dolohov were all dead, several Aurors had been hit by various curses but none were very serious, now as the headmaster looked around all the death eaters were dead.

Two of the Aurors were dispatched to the Ministry to bring reinforcements to take away the bodies, twenty three of them including Wormtail.

Once that was done everyone Disapparated to the Burrow where a very worried Molly Weasley waited with some bone crushing hugs.

The headlines in the Prophet the next morning announced the death of several prominent citizens and members of the government and Wizengamot. All together there were ninety seven unexplained deaths that occured all at the same time.

## Chapter twenty six

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### Hermione and the Dursleys

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Once Mrs Weasleys welcome consisting of bone crushing hugs was over there was a short celebration held in the now crowded Burrow kitchen, each of those there had taken a shower to rid them of the dirt and smell of the battle that had taken place. Harry was given the privilege of taking the first shower followed by Hermione. Every one else took their turn and returned to the kitchen refreshed and ready to celebrate.

Harry found it a little odd as they all expressed their joy at the demise of Voldemort, and even though they had said they were going to celebrate quite a few of them just up and left, huge smiles were on all their faces. At eight-o-clock the following morning Harry along with Hermione and Dumbledore left the Burrow by portkey and arrived outside the main doors of Hogwarts School, to his surprise there was a huge party going on right there on the lawns in front of the school, it looked to him like it had been an all night party held by both locals and students and no doubt a few of the students family members.

As Harry was about to take hold of Hermione's hand, he was stopped by a rush of people who hoisted him up on to their shoulders and began to cheer for him, he as usual felt a little embarrassed by all the attention and wanted nothing more than to slip off home with his wife and relax.

It was nearly an hour before he and Hermione managed to escape what appeared to be the entire population of Hogsmeade, all of them wanting to shake his hand. Madam Rosemerta was dishing out butterbeer as though it was simple drinking water. Elves rushed around serving sandwiches to any one who wanted one. Harry managed to catch hold of Hermione's hand and holding her by her waist he began to dance, using the dance as a cover Harry's feet led

them gradually toward their home where they very quickly retreated into the invisible building.

Just five very short minutes later Harry was wishing he was back outside with the party, he had forgotten that Hermione had been mad at him for some reason. Hermione however had not forgotten, and the moment they entered the living room Harry was being yelled at by both his wife and his mother for getting himself killed. The fact that he was alive and standing there listening to them should prove that he was okay he thought, but that argument seemed to hold no sway with Hermione who was now crying, as she yelled about how he had broken her heart, and scared her half to death.

“It wasn’t me love, it was that damn Voldemort,” Harry said trying to get the two women to calm down, “there was no way I could have let that killing curse hit you.”

Hermione stopped her tirade when he mentioned the curse he had jumped in front of and started to smother him in kisses, ‘she was so scared she forgot about how it happened’ he thought as his mother too stopped telling him off.

“Harry how did you do it... you know come back from being dead?” she asked as she leant her head against his shoulder.

“Well actually love, I’m not too sure, though I do have a theory, still I’ll tell you what I think then you can work out if I got it right, first when Voldemort first tried to kill me I think he left part of his soul, ‘like a horcrux but one he never knew about’ any way that part of his soul connected it self to my soul, you could say it was feeding off me, anyway this time when he killed me, in stead of my own soul leaving me, I think it sort of got pushed to the side sort of, anyway that left the piece of Voldemort wide open and I think it was that that died, or was driven out to go where ever the rest of his evil soul has gone, do you know what I mean, well as soon as that happened my own soul popped back from where ever it had been hiding and I woke up as though nothing had happened. Well that’s my theory. So what do you think?” Harry took a deep breath and waited to see what she had to say.

"So Voldemort killed himself, or at least part of him self. Seems sort of right, some of that poetic justice I read about," Hermione said as she looked up into his eyes.

Two weeks after the defeat of Voldemort Harry woke to find Hermione was not lying next to him, her half of the bed seemed cool so he knew she had been up for a while, 'Hermione love' he called as he got showered before he dressed.

'I'm down in the living room Harry' she replied to his implied question 'talking to your mum'

Harry thought he felt a chuckle coming from his wife but he dismissed it as he made his way down to the kitchen 'I'm just going to make some breakfast, do you want any?'

'No thanks love, Harrrrreeey' Hermione said in a strange way 'don't take to long we're going out for the day'

Again Harry thought he could feel his wife chuckling, it was a rather odd feeling, something like she knew something that nobody else did, and she found the knowing amusing, that was the best way he could describe it. Intrigued he rushed through his breakfast only bothering to make himself some egg on toast.

An hour later they were on the Hogsmeade road heading for the village, "This will do, we can not be seen from either direction," Hermione said as she pulled Harry to a stop.

Harry cocked an eye brow in a similar fashion to how Hermione did when she was inquisitive, but for some reason the way Harry did it made Hermione laugh. "Ok so what do we need secrecy for," he asked watching as Hermione took her wand and placed it in her bag. "Give me your wand."

Harry passed his wand to Hermione and watched as she placed it with hers in her bag "We won't be needing these," she said a large smile breaking out on her face. Then with a quick wave of her hand and some odd sounding spell in a language Harry had never heard before Hermione suddenly began to grow, just a few seconds later

she had grown and aged, she looked around twenty five or so to Harry.

“How on earth!” Harry started but he was silenced when she said yet another spell in the odd language.

Less than five seconds later Harry was staring up at his mother, the shock made his legs go weak and he sat down on the grass at the side of the road, “Hermione?” he asked sounding a little stunned.

The voice that replied “Of course silly,” was not his wife’s voice, it was the voice he had heard in his dreams, in his nightmares when attacked by Dementors, and from the portrait, it was his mother’s voice.

“Time for some pay back,” she said grinning, a gleam of triumph in her eyes.

“Huh,” Harry said being as it was all his brain came up with.

“We’re off to Privet Drive love,” his wife/mum said still with the gleam in her eye, “I want you to apparate us to Mrs Figg’s.”

As soon as Hermione mentioned Mrs Figg Harry knew he was only along for the ride, he knew that if Hermione had known where Mrs Figg lived she would have left him at home. “Hermione what are you plotting?” he asked knowing he would have to wait to find out.

Hermione’s answer was simply a feral grin that almost, almost but not quite feel sorry for his relatives.

Sitting in Mrs Figg’s cat smelling house and drinking a cup of tea Harry listened as his wife gave him some instructions, Mrs Figg sat in her old arm chair rubbing her hands and chuckling loudly as Hermione outlined the plan she had concocted with the help of Harry’s parents, Sirius and Godric, Godric having been the one to tell her the appearance altering spell. Harry finished his drink then followed by Hermione he made his way to number four Privet drive.

Petunia Dursley opened her front door to find her hated nephew standing smiling at her “What do you want freak?” she asked as she made to shut the door but found she couldn’t. Petunia glanced across the street checking to see if any of the neighbours were watching before she looked down at Harry and said “Come in quick.”

Harry stepped in to the hall as his aunt walked toward her immaculate kitchen “Shut the door and wipe your filthy feet,” she snarled at him.

Harry watched her walk into the kitchen before he closed the door, then followed her in to the kitchen, he remembered the details extremely well and was thinking of the times he had been forced to scrub the floor until his hands bled.

“So what are you after, what do you want,” his aunt snarled at him again.

“Oh I just wanted to visit, tell you about my new school, about my wife Hermione, and about all the millions of pounds my dad left me,” Harry said casually.

“Millions of pounds?” Petunia repeated his words “what do you mean millions.”

“Oh I don’t know how many, all I know is that I have millions and millions and millions,” Harry said trying to sound like a little boy.

Harry heard the kitchen door open but he ignored it, not showing any indication that he knew Hermione/mum had just walked in to the room.

“Are you all right aunt Petunia,” he asked innocently.

Petunia was staring extremely pale faced over his shoulder; Harry turned around to take a look then shrugged as he turned back, “Aunt Petunia?”

Hermione/mum walked around the kitchen as though she were inspecting it for dust, she rubbed her finger across the counter then examined it and tutted, using the nickname told to her by Lily she looked at the aunt and spoke.

“Always the same eh Tunny, you always were a little too obsessive.”

“I... you... you... died, you died years ago,” Petunia spluttered staring at Hermione.

“No aunt Petunia, I didn’t die, my mum and dad died,” Harry said as though his aunt was speaking to him.

“I was watching the way you treated Harry and I don’t like what I saw, so I have decided to spend a few years haunting you and the gross ugly fat lump of rubbish you call Vernon, and that equally ugly fat brain dead pig you call your son. Did you ever think of weighing the fat freak, you could get a good price for all that fat, I’m sure Harry might be able find you a hag willing to eat more fat than meat,” Hermione was saying as she opened cupboards and drawers.

“Don’t you dare call my Dudder’s a freak,” Petunia screeched.

“I never said a word,” Harry said struggling hard against the crushing desire to laugh.

Petunia stared at him as though she had forgotten he was there “Not you freak, her,” she said pointing at Hermione/mum who was now turning on the taps of the sink.

Harry made a show of looking around the kitchen “Who?” he asked sounding convincingly confused.

“Her, that freak sister of mine,” Petunia yelled at him.

Harry backed away a little “Are you feeling ok aunt?” he asked.

“He can’t see me, hasn’t a clue,” Hermione/mum said as she lifted a bag of flour from one of the cupboards, and watched as she levitated it out of the door.

They all heard the soft thud as the bag of flour hit the floor, a cloud of white dust floated in through the narrow opening, Harry stood still not turning to look where the thud came from, he was beginning to enjoy

this immensely, all he had to do was to resist the urge to laugh, and as it was one of the people who had made his first eleven years so miserable he found it quite difficult to remain straight faced.

Hermione/mum tutted “Dear me Tunny it looks like you dropped something, and look at all that dust,” she said as she levitated every thing from the fridge.

Petunia was suddenly convinced it was Harry that was doing everything, “You evil little freak,” she shouted at him pushing him out of the kitchen, “get out, get out of my house and don’t come back,” she screamed as she pushed him down the hallway.

Harry spent the next two hours sitting in the park, carefully balanced on one of the benches so he could watch in Hermione's mind as his brilliant wife made more mess and plagued his aunt even more.

“You really thought it was my Harry?” she asked as Petunia returned to the kitchen after throwing Harry from the house.

It was when Vernon arrived home that Harry began to worry, he watched as his fat uncle stepped into the hall and shut the front door, as soon as he turned to walk to the kitchen he saw Hermione, or more precisely he saw who he thought was Lily Potter standing watching him and he gulped as the sweat immediately began to run down his face.

“Good evening fat slob,” she greeted him, “why don’t you join your evil wife in the kitchen.”

Harry chuckled he knew he had no need to worry as Hermione wandlessly and effortlessly levitated his huge uncle off the ground and sent him floating into the kitchen. Vernon with his eyes wide in fright stared around at the usually spotless kitchen; Hermione had emptied the contents of the cupboards and fridge onto the floor and spread the mess over every surface.

Vernon’s piggy eyes looked around the kitchen for Petunia before he saw her pinned to the ceiling, a second later he was pinned there with her.

"Put me down you freak," he yelled trying to claw through the air.

"Ok," Hermione said and she let him drop, Harry could have sworn he felt the bump through the park bench as the fat man bounced off the kitchen floor.

For some odd reason the events he watched as Hermione tormented Vernon reminded him of the day he had blown up his aunt and he began to chuckle at the memory.

Hermione had now tired of playing with the Dursleys, she began to put the finishing touch to her plans, Petunia Dursley suddenly found her self back on the ground and standing next to Vernon.

A piece of string appeared and wrapped its self around their wrists, then two sandwich boards appeared one slung over the shoulders of each Dursley, the writing that appeared both at the back and front seemed to shock Vernon more than the floating had, both boards were irremovable for now and read in large print,

'This is not an advertisement it is a true statement of fact.

I Vernon Dursley verify that I am a child beater, I beat my nephew with out reason or cause, every day for ten years, I often broke his bones, I also enjoyed starving him. From the age of two I locked him in a cupboard under the stairs, only letting him out to do all the house chores garden work and the cooking. I spent all those years not only beating him but also degrading him and calling him names, my name is Dursley I live at number four Privet Drive, little whinging Surrey.'

With a wave of her hand Hermione emptied all their pockets ensuring that they were penniless and with out any of their credit cards, she then placed a small metal bracelet on Petunia's wrist and stepped back as the port key activated and took the Dursleys to an alley just off Piccadilly square London.

Five minutes later Harry was joined on the bench in the park by Hermione who was back to normal.

"I hope they take a week to walk home," she said before they both vanished from the bench.

## Chapter twenty seven

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### The walk home

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Vernon Dursley looked up and down the alley he and his wife had suddenly found them selves in, he was wondering what to do, there was only one way out of the alley. Hermione had chosen the location well because she knew it well; her dad often parked his car on one of his customer's car parks at the blocked end. She couldn't remember how many times she had walked with her mum and dad out onto Piccadilly Circus.

While a rather hysterical Petunia watched him, Vernon ran from gate to gate in the hope of finding one open so that he could hopefully find something to cover up the sandwich board he was unable to remove. By the time he got to the blocked end of the alley he was sweating rather profusely. Giving up he walked slowly back to his still crazy wife, who seemed to be busy stamping her feet and kicking the wall.

"Now look what you did you fat slob," she screamed at him as he walked up to her.

"Me!" Vernon exclaimed "It's you who started all this shit, just because you couldn't get James bloody Potter to look at you."

"It was you who hated Harry, it was you started hitting him," Petunia accused him.

"And what did you expect, you hated the little freak because he was better looking than Dudley and because you hated your sister, I had to put up with that, and my stupid wife throwing her self at another man right in front of me, I'm surprised Lily didn't do this to you before now you stupid cow," Vernon retaliated.

The argument went on for nearly an hour before they were both too exhausted to argue any more. Vernon tried to fill the silence that had

finally fallen by trying once again to pull the sandwich board off his shoulders, it was becoming heavy, it was when he tried to sit down on a step that he realised just how bad things were. He found it was not possible to sit while still wearing the board; he would have to stay on his feet until they could get home. That thought made him wonder just where they were and how they were going to get to little Whinging.

Two hours, several slaps across the face from angry women he had tried to beg some money from, and so many people sneering and swearing at them that Vernon had lost track, found them both looking up at a road sign that said, Upper Whinging 19 miles. Little Whinging 20 miles.

Vernon looked at the sign and almost wept, he was regretting ever meeting Petunia Evans, with her stupid obsessions, she was obsessed with cleanliness yet she had made a small boy do the cleaning, she was obsessed with keeping up appearances with the neighbours, but she had dressed the same boy in ragged baggy worn out clothes that their fat son had worn out, she was also obsessed with giving the stupid fat son everything he wanted, her stupid obsessions had cost Vernon a lot of money over the years, and now he felt sure that he was going to suffer a heart attack because of her obsessive hatred of her sister. 'I could have accepted the freak if she hadn't hated him so much' he reasoned with himself 'it would have been easy enough, all I had to do was feed the freak and then ignore him, yes I could have done that'.

As Petunia watched her over sized, under sexed, over bearing husband, she wondered what she had ever seen in him, she could think of no other reason for marrying him than the fact he was ambitious, he would one day be able to buy her the house she wanted. Then she began to wonder why she had hated her nephew so much, she had hated him from the day when Lily had told their parents she was pregnant and they had made so much fuss over their youngest daughter.

The freak sister who had married a very wealthy good looking man who was also a bloody freak. A bloody freak who had slapped her face when she had walked naked into his room and jumped on him while he was in bed, when she grabbed his thing he had slapped her, not hard but enough to make her stop, it wasn't her fault she couldn't

leave him alone when he kept asking her to, it wasn't her fault she wanted him so much she was willing to ruin his marriage, it wasn't her fault he rejected her, it wasn't her fault he was staying in the room next to her while they were staying at her parents home.

Vernon moved on as some one else swore at him, Petunia followed and tried to hide behind him when a lady spat at her. They had another fifteen miles before they would be out of the populated area and into the countryside where they might get some respite from all the hateful and the degrading things being said to them.

Another hour of walking found them standing waiting to cross the road at a busy roundabout, a small truck had stopped and the driver was waving at them and smiling. Vernon thanked the stars, their luck had changed.

The driver met them at the back of his truck and asked if they wanted a lift, he asked where they were going and said he could give them a lift to two miles from Upper Whinging, both Vernon and Petunia accepted readily. The smiling driver helped Vernon push Petunia over the tail board of the truck; he then willingly helped Vernon over giving an extra little push as the huge bulk of Vernon toppled over the tail board following Petunia.

The driver grinned 'It serves them right' he thought as he opened the driver door looking at the sign that had been painted there, it read 'R. J. Skillet, waste offal removal'.

Harry apparated with Hermione to Hogsmeade, and then took her into the three broomsticks for some lunch, though it was late in the afternoon Madam Rosemerta was happy to make a special meal for the couple who had rid the world of he-who-must-not-be-named.

Over the meal they laughed at the things that had happened earlier. "When you said time for some payback, I never expected to enjoy it quite so much," Harry admitted just before leaving his empty lunch plate and taking a huge slice of chocolate cake. As they left the pub and headed back for the school they were both laughing and looking forward to reaching Gryffindor common room where they could relate their story to Ginny and the twins.

They both enjoyed the leisurely walk back to Hogwarts, today was the last day of the holidays, tomorrow the Hogwarts express would arrive and the day after they would start another year of school.

Harry knew that Hermione was looking forward to being back in school and in an odd way he found himself looking forward to it as well, he quite enjoyed doing the lessons now and doing them mostly without Hermione having to carry him through it all like she had the last time. Twenty five minutes after leaving the pub Harry rang the huge bell at the gates of Hogwarts School.

Reg Skillet's truck pulled up at the side of the road just a hundred yards from the junction where he would change direction, he had considered taking them a little further away from their destination, maybe even dropping them at the processing plant but finally decided to stick to his word and drop them where he had offered.

"Oy, you two time to get off," he yelled from the relatively fresh air of his cab.

Vernon and Petunia Dursley climbed awkwardly from the back of the truck smelling just about as bad as it was possible to smell. Reg could smell them as they walked past the front of his truck even though he had kept the windows closed.

The rest of their walk to Little Whinging was relatively trouble free as the people they did encounter crossed the road in a vain attempt to get away from the awful smell. Windows in the houses they passed were suddenly slammed closed as were any doors that had been left open.

Two very tired weary and extremely bad smelling Dursleys finally reached home, Vernon wondered how they were to bathe when they were still stuck with the sandwich boards, he need not have worried though because as soon as they entered the house the boards vanished leaving both of them feeling as though they had just lost something, the weight loss made them feel oddly light as they fought for the bathroom, Petunia won that fight when she argued that there was a lot less of her to wash than there was of her hugely fat and now to her grotesque husband.

Their clothes were thrown out and Vernon was made to sleep in the bed they had once forced their nephew to sleep in. It was going to be a very long time before the Dursleys got over their walk home from London, if they ever did.

The abusive letters and hate mail began to arrive the day after when Petunia was once again in the bath trying to get rid of the lingering smell of rotten offal.

Harry and Hermione spent a couple of hours in the common room of Gryffindor tower, telling their story to Ginny and the twins, the room was still full of laughter when they finally left to go home to Gryffindor house, they were met in the entrance hall by Phil who passed them an important looking letter with the seal of Gringotts on it.

A/Note For those who don't know 'offal' is the smelly parts of butchered animals that cannot be eaten.

## Chapter twenty eight

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### End of the Dursleys

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Watched by Hermione Harry slowly opened the letter from Gringotts; he could not help but wonder why they had sent him a letter addressed to Lord Potter.

‘Lord Potter, Earl of Gryffindor, Keeper of the Sword, Master of Hogwarts

Dear Sir,

Due to the sad demise of Mr Grabble it is with a matter of some urgency that I ask you attend a meeting with Mr Erick, head of vault keepers at your soonest convenience.

Mr Alrick, head of Wizard Affairs.

Gringotts Bank, Diagon Alley, London.’

Harry read the letter and then passed it to Hermione, “So what do you think?” he asked as she looked up at him.

“I don’t know, who is this Mr Grabble, do you know?” Hermione asked looking as puzzled as Harry had looked.

“No Idea, never heard of him, wonder why it’s addressed to Lord Potter, you don’t suppose I could be a lord?” Harry said examining the envelope.

“Well I suppose you had better send them an owl, your Lordship,” Hermione said chuckling at the look on Harry’s face.

“Yeah, I suppose, we could go there tomorrow afternoon if Dobby is free. So how should I answer, I Harry Potter, Lord of the cupboard

under the stairs do hereby grant you an audience tomorrow afternoon at three-o-clock," Harry said laughing.

Hermione with a huge grin on her face gently slapped Harry on the shoulder before rolling her eyes at him, she then walked over to the writing desk and wrote a reply to Gringotts informing them that Harry and his wife would be visiting the bank around three-o-clock the next day and if it was convenient they could meet with Mr Erick at that time, two minutes later her owl Godric left the house on his way to the wizarding bank.

At one the next afternoon Harry and Hermione walked hand in hand around Diagon Alley, casually they did some window shopping, reaching Madam Malkin's shop Hermione stopped to admire some wedding robes.

"Do you regret not having a proper wedding?" Harry asked as he watched her smiling at something.

Hermione looked thoughtful for a while before she answered, "No, not really, I mean all this, you and me being married was like a game, just some fun to begin with, like a fairy tale or something, but that has all changed. I mean we were so young. I didn't even know you, now I do know you, and I have fallen in love with you. I mean proper love, real ever lasting love, so no I don't regret anything at all, I have a wonderful husband I love with all my heart, we have a beautiful home and some great friends, all we need now are some children and..."

Harry interrupted "I think we are still a little young for children, though I do want a big family one day."

"Harry, I didn't mean we should have children now, we have to finish school, find a career that sort of thing before we have a family," Hermione said blushing.

Harry smiled, he was happy just to know that Hermione had fallen in love with him, "Well Mrs Potter just so you know, I love you more than life it self."

At three that afternoon Harry and Hermione entered the banks foyer where they were met by one of the Goblin guards, with a slight bow the guard asked them to follow him, he then led the way through the bank into the offices, having been ushered into a rather plush office, filled with the finest office furniture either of them had seen, the two young Potters took a seat and waited for Mr Erick.

They were not kept waiting long, a really old Goblin shuffled into the office and without a word he took the seat at the desk opposite to where Harry and Hermione sat watching.

‘Must be Mr Erick’ Harry offered as he watched the Goblin make himself comfortable.

“Mr and Mrs Potter, my name is Erick, I am the senior vault keeper here at Gringotts. Now down to business, your account keeper Grabble has succumbed to the final fate of us all, and so it is my job to find a replacement account keeper. I have here a short list of the three available account keepers along with a little about each of them,” Mr Erick said handing Harry a piece of parchment.

Harry took a quick glance at the names of the unknown Goblins on the parchment, then handing the parchment back to Mr Erick he politely announced that he would like Mr Griphook to take charge of the account.

Mr Erick froze as he took the parchment from Harry; with his eyes wide he said “I beg your pardon?”

“Griphook! that is who I would like for my account keeper,” Harry repeated remembering how well he and Griphook had got on together in his other life, Griphook had become his account keeper just before his twentieth birthday and he had made a really good job of it.

“You do know that as the richest account holder in Britain that appointing some one as junior as Mr Griphook is a large risk to take,” Mr Erick said as he pressed a button on the desk, “send Griphook up to my office.”

Mr Erick sat rummaging through his drawers while they waited for Griphook to arrive began to speak,

“It will take Griphook at least a week to prepare before he can take over your account, meanwhile Lord Potter we have a small problem, your grandfather appointed a Muggle by the name of Dursley as general manager of one of the companies you own, due to some sort of domestic and legal problems Mr Dursley has not been seen in the office for some days.

I must admit looking at the files it seems that Grunnings has not actually made any profit or loss since he took over. I should also say that up until this week Grunnings shares have remained rather consistent, they have neither risen or fallen more than a knut or two, however something has happened in the past few days and the value of the shares has dropped dramatically. Usually with a wizard of your age these problems would be sorted out by your account keeper, but as you have no keeper yet, I am afraid I must ask you as majority share holder if you wish to sell off the shares at a loss as they are now, or would you prefer to wait to see if by some miracle they rally.”

“What happens to Grunnings if I sell my shares?” Harry asked warily.

“The business will most likely be bought and split up,” Erick answered.

“And the workers?” Harry continued “what about them?”

“No doubt they will lose their jobs,” Erick said as a knock at the door interrupted them.

“Enter,” Mr Erick said gruffly.

A face Harry knew well looked around the door, “You sent for me sir,” Griphook said politely.

“Yes Griphook, Lord Potter has just appointed you as his account keeper, you will move into Grabbles’ office and bring yourself up to date on Lord Potters’ account,” Erick said rather stiffly.

Griphook with a rather shocked look on his face nodded then with a quick yes sir he left closing the door behind him.

“I think I will take a day or two to think about the problem of Grunnings,” Harry said “Oh and why is it you keep calling me Lord Potter?”

“Lord Potter is the title given to the head of the Potter house,” Erick answered replacing the parchments he had on his desk back into his desk drawer.

Harry stood and taking Hermione’s hand he said “Thank you Mr Erick, may your business be profitable,” he then lead Hermione out of the office and along the corridor toward the main banking area.

Five minutes later Hermione was staring at the huge piles of gold that filled the Potter vaults, she had never seen inside a vault before and was amazed that Harry could have so much wealth, while Hermione stared at the large room full of gold, Harry filled his money pouch with galleons, then he filled one of his pockets.

Up stairs Harry exchanged some galleons for Muggle money then hand in hand he and Hermione made their way out into the street outside the Leaky Cauldron, boarding one of the taxi’s that always seemed to be waiting there Harry asked to be taken to Grunnings.

At the reception desk in Grunnings office building Harry waited patiently while the receptionist ignored him and Hermione as she chatted busily to a friend on the phone. After waiting and watching the woman ignoring them for a full five minutes, Hermione began to lose her temper.

“Excuse me, do you like working here?” Hermione asked loudly.

The receptionist looked up briefly then turned back to her chatting, Hermione walked around the desk and placed her hand on the phone receiver cradle,

"You should ring the head of personnel and inform them that Lord and Lady Potter are here," Hermione said in her professor McGonagall like voice.

The receptionist looked daggers at Hermione "Just who the hell do you think you are?" she seethed.

"The people that own this place, that's who," Hermione seethed back "and when you have finished that call you should be grateful you are not calling the employment exchange about finding a new job."

Harry watched the exchange then listened as the receptionist pressed a number on the board in front of her and moaned about them to who ever had answered the phone, two minutes later they were joined by a security officer who insisted that they leave the premises. Harry had had enough, with a quick surreptitious wave of his hand the security officer was asleep on his feet.

"You can start to look for another job, and don't use that phone, I'll see you get paid up to the time we arrived," he said coldly to the receptionist.

The receptionist looked at him as though he were crazy until she saw something in his eyes that told her he was not joking; she knew from that quick look that she had indeed just lost her job.

Harry walked behind the desk and picked up the phone, then he pressed the button marked 'personnel' to connect him to the personnel office, the ex receptionist listened as he announced his name; he had barely replaced the phone when the head of personnel rushed in to the reception area.

"Lord and Lady Potter, am so pleased to meet you, I received the message from your account keeper just a few minutes ago, welcome to Grunnings," the woman said as she held out her hand to Hermione.

"I just fired this one," Harry said nodding in the direction of the receptionist, he then once again carefully waved his hand and the security officer was freed, not wanting to lose his job and confused

not knowing what had happened to him the security man turned and left without a word.

“You fired the receptionist?” the personnel officer asked.

“Yes she was ignorant and rude to my wife, she ignored us while she chatted to someone on the phone, so yes I fired her, and I recommend she be refused a what do you call it,” Harry answered

“You mean a reference dear,” Hermione offered.

“Yes that’s exactly what I mean love,” Harry said smiling at Hermione.

By the time Harry had reached the personnel office he had changed his mind about firing the receptionist, he did not want to be like a Malfoy.

“That receptionist, I changed my mind, I want our complaint dealt with in what ever might be the normal way for Grunnings,” he commented as they took a seat in the personnel office.

Looking at the name plate on the desk Harry began to ask a few questions “So Mrs Watling, I am informed that Mr Dursley has not been in to work for several days, do you know why?”

Mrs Watling nodded and quickly pulled a news paper from a desk drawer, leaning forward she offered the paper to Harry. He knew at first glance what was keeping his uncle from work, “Oh that,” he said chuckling as he handed the paper to Hermione.

“I don’t think this captures aunt Petunia at her best,” Hermione said as she too began to chuckle.

Neither of them needed to read the article that had a picture of sandwich boarded Vernon and Petunia walking down a street on their return walk from London. Leaving the office thirty minutes later Harry was smiling. He had dismissed uncle Vernon because he now had a criminal record, and he had promoted a young man that Vernon had taken a dislike to, a young man who had been purposely over looked for a promotion several times because, Harry had learned, Vernon

was worried that the young man would take his job from him. (The following years would show that Harry had made a good choice that day, as Grunnings grew and expanded).

When Harry and Hermione left through the reception area they received a full apology from one rather red faced receptionist. As the office building door closed behind them Harry grinned, the Dursleys were now left with nothing but a bad reputation, a house that was heavily mortgaged and a fat son who had been expelled from Smeltings School.

Leaving the gates of Grunnings Harry had an Idea, taking hold of Hermione around her waist he looked around to see if anyone was watching then without a word he apparated them to the street just outside Hermione's parents house.

Hermione looked around in surprise, then when she realised where they were her eyes lit up and she wrapped her arms around Harry's neck "I love you so much," she said as she gave him a quick kiss.

"I thought we might visit your mum and dad," he said as he gave Hermione a quick kiss in return.

## Chapter Twenty nine

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### The close

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Harry held Hermione's hand as she knocked on the front door of her parent's house, he had thought it odd she wanted to knock on her own mothers' door until she said it was the best way she could think of surprising her mum.

Had Harry not known Hermione so well he may have been surprised just how right she was, her mum nearly had an heart attack when she opened the door and saw them standing there, after first trying to beat Mrs Weasley at squeezing the life out of him his mother in law then commenced to kissing his cheeks, by the time he was rescued by his father in law Harry was an extremely bright shade of scarlet.

It was a little later as they sat around the fire together, Mr Granger sitting in his old arm chair, Mrs Granger sitting on the floor between his legs, he and Hermione were sitting holding hands on the comfortable old leather couch. Harry suddenly realised as he looked at them that his in-laws were still a fairly young couple, still deeply in love, and he realised that they kept that love alive and fresh by showing it to each other all the time, they did things together even worked together but the thing that made him think was the thing that they were talking about, the date they went out on the night before, they had been married for sixteen years and still went out on dates, they never let their love fade into the background of their marriage and it gave him something to think about.

He was just fourteen years old, his wife would be fifteen in just a few weeks, that meant that they had around another hundred and fifty years together, a hundred and fifty years left to show his love to Hermione. He determined to take a leaf from his in-laws book, he would spend those years not only loving Hermione, he would spend them being in love with her, and now that they were free of the

burden of Tom Riddle almost dictating everything they had done together up until now Harry decided that today was the time to begin.

Going back to Hogwarts was a little of an anticlimax, they had to work just as hard toward their eventual final year, and the fact that they had defeated Voldemort despite his Horcruxes, and that outside the school the wizarding world was still celebrating the demise of the most evil of all dark wizards, and that both Harry and Hermione were world known heroes, they were shown no favours by any of their professors.

All too quickly as far as Harry was concerned they fell into the daily routine of school life. Harry's other life seemed to be fading into the back recesses of his memory, and by the time they had finally reached their final day at school he felt no different than any other seventeen year old married boy might feel. Except of course for the fact that he was the only seventeen year old who was married to Hermione, who just happened to have grown from the plain little girl she had been when he first met her into one of the most beautiful women to ever graduate from the worlds best school of magic.

Together they setup a broom making business and though Hermione still did not like to fly, she did occasionally try out a broom. Their first child a boy they named Henry was born exactly two weeks after Harry's twentieth birthday, he had black hair and the same colour green eyes as Lily, that looked even brighter than Harry's, and he developed a love of reading that rivalled his mum Hermione's.

They were next blessed with identical twin daughters with bushy raven coloured hair, a recklessness and a love of flying like Harry but with their mother's intelligence, Hermione said they got that from their brown eyes. Henry, Jacqueline and Georgina, were a great source of pride for Harry and Hermione, all three of them were intelligent and extremely good at magic.

Harry always remembered the day he had decided to spend his life showing Hermione that he loved her, it was no different on their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary when he took her out for a meal then on to a cinema, where they sat on the back row and did the things that young couples did while the lights went down.

When at the age of sixty Hermione accepted the position of headmistress at Hogwarts, Harry packed in his work, and together they moved to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Six months later Harry Potter took the job of grounds man and keeper of the keys at Hogwarts, it was work he enjoyed and he could still take his wife out on a date when ever the mood struck him. He was the only multi millionaire to ever work at Hogwarts doing the lowliest of the jobs there. They still lived in Gryffindor manor having their grandchildren in to visit them when ever they wanted to take a walk from their dorms.

On Hermione's 100th birthday Harry took the whole family to visit Disney world in America, Harry had started to count his family members as they boarded a muggle airplane for the long journey, several minutes later he gave up and sitting next to his wife gave her a rather passionate birthday kiss before sitting back to enjoy the journey.

"So how many were there this count?" Hermione asked smiling at Harry as he relaxed next to her.

"I have no idea my love, I gave up after I had counted up to forty three for the fifth time, there are so many young ones running up and down one would think we were running a school," he chuckled then took Hermione's hand in his and settled in for the flight.

"So darling remember when we first talked of having a family you said you wanted a big one, do you think we reached big yet?" Hermione asked squeezing his hand a little.

"Ask me again on your 200th birthday, I might be able to count them all by then," Harry chuckled again "I have a little something planned for us in a couple of days, so Mrs Potter would you like to accompany me on a date this Wednesday evening?"

"What time were you thinking of going out?" Hermione asked quietly.

"How about seven thirty?" Harry asked grinning.

"Seven thirty will be fine Mr Potter, you can pick me up at home," Hermione said joining Harry in a chuckle.

"Hey every one Nan and Grandee are going on a date again," shouted a little eight or nine year old replica of Harry.

"Yuck, more of that mushy stuff, eewwh," answered the voice of a small bushy haired girl further down the plane.

Harry took a deep breath and silently thanked a young man named Ashford Lupin for his second chance at life, he then leant over and kissed his beloved Hermione once again, and once again he told himself he was the luckiest man alive thanks to being blown up and killed.

End.

A/N forgive me for this last chapter being so short and slightly rushed, though it still takes the story in the direction I was headed. I started all this because of the grand children and now I like it almost as much as they do, mind you I never got the time to read as much as they do.

I hope to be able to correct that little inconsistency eventually, so to all you loyal readers I offer my gratitude for the reviews, I hope that when I next get time to write for you, you will all enjoy it just as much as I enjoy writing it for you, with that I will wish you all good-day.